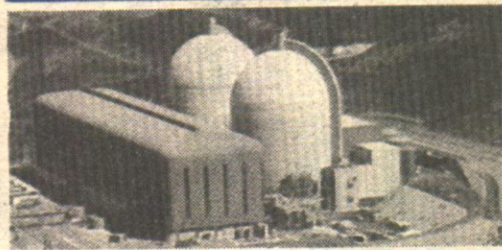


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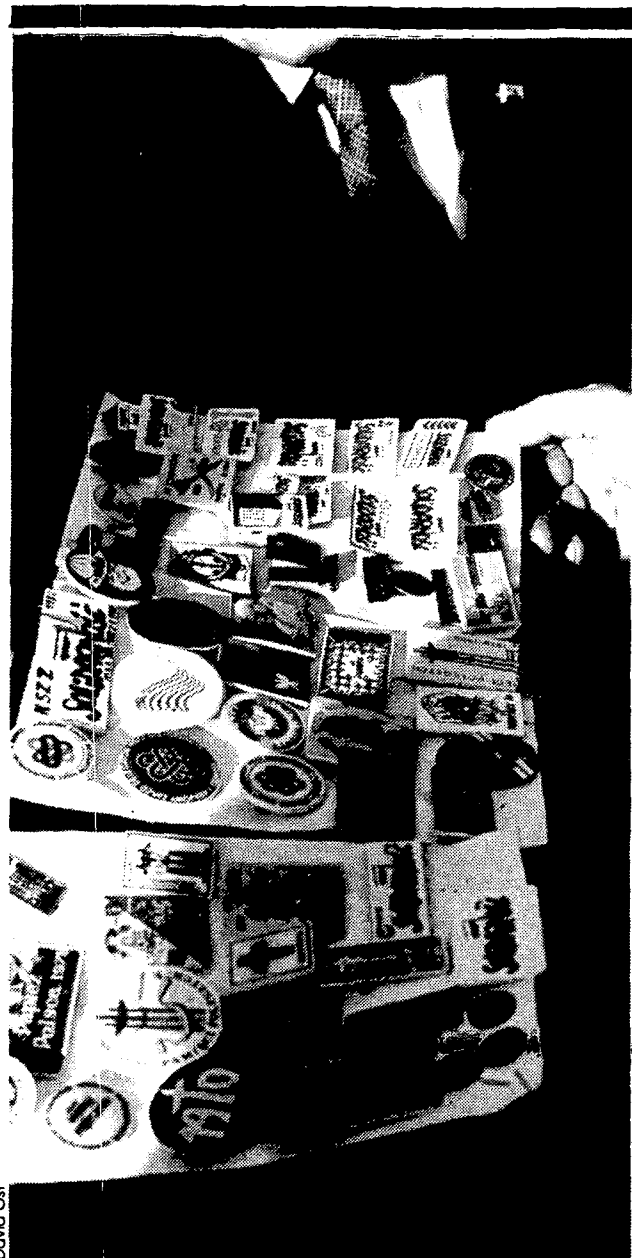
Parting the nylon curtain

David Moberg on the
Steelworkers' challenge
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James North reports

**Forced
Relocation
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THE INSIDE STORY



Time is running out for the government and Solidarity

By David Ost

WARSAW

For the first time since the Polish revolution began 16 months ago, Solidarity leaders are beginning to talk openly about a struggle for power. In some areas, workers' militias are being formed and preparations for assuming power on a local level are being urged by emergency union meetings throughout the country.

The official press is presenting Solidarity's militance as the irresponsible adventurism of the union's National Committee. (On Dec. 7 they quoted extensively from a recent closed meeting of the NC, thus conceding that they have illegal wiretaps on Solidarity meetings.) In fact, the union, whose official press and communiques have always been more moderate than the mood of its members, is only belatedly responding to pressure from below. The government and official press have expressed astonishment at the NC's discussions about being ready for confrontation and power. But every thinking person with open eyes has heard these views expressed countless times. At an Oct. 17 rally in the Gdansk shipyard, the workers greeted with a two-minute standing ovation the line in a speech that called party leaders "the garbage of our people, who will be sent to the dustbins of history." Marian Jurczyk, a union leader from Szczecin, even excluded the party and government from the ranks of Poles, calling them betrayers who have sold out to the Russians. This speech, too, met with wide approval, although many unionists protested strongly against the anti-Semitic remarks that were part of it.

On Oct. 28, I spent the one-hour general strike at the

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Warsaw steel plant. The part of the rally that prompted the greatest reaction, with workers applauding in time, turning around and smiling to each other, came when a strike leader announced that he was quitting the party.

The radicalism of the workers has in general been expressed in an unexpected and ironic way: by a decline in union participation. This trend has been noted with concern by union activists for some months. On the one hand, the problem is caused by the unfulfilled hopes of August 1980, which unleashed expectations and dreams that no single organization could realize.

Solidarity has been making demands and negotiating for more than a year, but it does so in a virtual vacuum of power. Without a decisive state able to carry out basic reforms, the old system drags on. There simply is no one to negotiate with! When Solidarity changed its focus from issuing demands, backed up by strike threats, and began to concentrate on longterm negotiations with the authorities at the highest levels, workers began to become less involved in union activity at all levels. If major concessions could have been exacted, the union's policies might have been redeemed in the eyes of the workers. But nothing has been gained at the bargaining table.

The demand for direct access to radio and TV has been met by a new barrage of anti-union propaganda. Solidarity's call for a Social Economic Council with extraordinary powers was answered by the government's unilateral decision to implement its "temporary" economic plan for 1982, thus convincing skeptics that it has no intention to change. In these conditions, Solidarity at the bargaining table has come to be seen simply as another part of the system by many workers, who have then withdrawn from union activities in order to fight things in their own way. The series of wildcat strikes last month and the drive to throw party branches out of the workplaces are manifestations of this popular mood.

From apathy to anger.

As the program of a new political organization called the Clubs of the Self-Governing Republic states in its preamble, "Exhausted people can, after all, easily go from a state of apathy to anger and aggression." This was demonstrated by the popular reaction to the use of force on Dec. 1 to break up the Warsaw Firefighters Training School (WOSP) strike. It doesn't matter than the eviction of the striking students was, by Western standards, restrained. (This was as much because the students did not resist as it was because of the reluctance on the part of the state.) The significance of the WOSP affair was the image of the 4,000 policemen in full riot gear, aided by helicopters carrying reinforcements, storming the gates of an institution on strike and occupied by its "workers." Marek Holuszko, a member of the Warsaw Solidarity leadership who was with the students in WOSP, commented afterwards, "They wanted to demonstrate how strikes would be broken in the future."

For the rest of the day, hundreds of people held a constant vigil at Solidarity headquarters waiting for word on how the union would react. Wojciech Todpogorz, a Solidarity member of a steel construction firm in Warsaw, told me that the entire crew was ready to walk out on the spot—"especially those who have been dropping away from union activity in recent months." But they, like workers at other sites, were restrained by the union exerting all its pressures. This included an emergency telegram from Walesa reminding workers that the union statute forbids unsanctioned strikes.

All the tensions, frustration and impatience emerged at the Warsaw union congress of Dec. 5-6. The delegates voted for widespread protest action, including a general strike if the former students of the WOSP are not allowed to finish their studies or are subject to any oppressive measures. (Indeed, the situation has changed since 1968, when Polish workers sat passively as universities were raided, students beaten and arrested and professors expelled.)

In all other matters, the Dec. 5-6 congress anticipated difficult times ahead. The leader of the region, Zbigniew Bujak, opened the session saying that the government is unwilling to negotiate seriously. A general strike is no longer enough because the government would respond to a general strike by doing nothing, Bujak argued. The question, therefore, is what comes after a strike? Bujak now proposes that with the government continuing to reject the union's demands for a Social Economic Council and a council to supervise the mass media, the union must create them, so that "these bodies will be in position to assume provisional control over the economy" when needed.

At the factory level, power is rapidly being consolidated by workers. Preparations for an "active strike" and the immensely popular drive to evict the party from the workplace make this clear. Until now, Solidarity insisted it did not want state power. Gerzegorz Rachaus, a union activist in Lodz, explained, "We could take power if we wanted to. That's no problem. The problem is what do we do then?" Lech Walesa has previously warned of a new totalitarianism if the union took over. And Jacek Kuron has noted that if Solidarity took power, "who would defend the workers?"

Yet now union leaders are beginning to wonder if there is an alternative. The domination of one party, guaranteed by the constitution, leave no non-disruptive role for an opposition. The government can work only with a collaborator, not an opposition. But Polish society demands an opposition, not a collaborator. Solidarity leaders would like to play the role of an opposition within the existing system. But when the system doesn't allow it, being in opposition is seen as undermining the unity of the state, prolonging chaos and increasing tensions. And the charges are correct—an opposition where none is allowed can't help but do these things. The opposition can either resign, as the party keeps demanding, or it can take the offensive against the system that stifles it, as many workers are demanding.

Within the last several weeks political groups and proto-parties have been emerging throughout the country, issuing programs, gathering signatures, holding meetings and preparing for elections to local government councils scheduled for February. (If the elections are not free and democratic, Solidarity has threatened to boycott them or to organize democratic elections on its own.) Already, groups such as the Polish Labor Party, the Polish Democratic Party, the Clubs of the Self-Governing Republic, Clubs in the Service of Independence, a Christian-Democratic Party and others have proclaimed their existence. These are the seeds of a future democracy, not a future totalitarianism.

Fortunately for the Polish revolution it has had time to develop differentiation within the opposition. But time is running out. Both sides say they are set upon a confrontation. And although Poland has shown for 16 months that it has a higher threshold for violence than most countries, the workers seem increasingly unwilling to give either the government or Solidarity much more time to postpone a final reckoning.

David Ost is in Warsaw on a Fulbright grant to research the Polish workers' movement there.

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IN THESE TIMES

Battle in Senate looms over voting rights extension

By John Jundis

ON DEC. 9, SENATE MAJORITY Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) dropped his plan to secure a quick extension of the Voting Rights Act. Baker discovered that an extension without amendment was opposed by Senators like Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), who want to weaken the Act, and by others like Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), who want to strengthen it.

Baker's withdrawal sets the stage for a fierce battle in the Senate early next year. At stake will be not merely a continuation of the civil rights gains of the past decades, but also the shape of politics in the '80s and '90s.

As a result of the 1980 census, 17 House seats will shift from the North to the South and West. The black and Hispanic vote, which has tended to be liberal and Democratic, is essential to any attempt to counter Southern conservatism. But without a continuation of the Voting Rights Act, black and Hispanic political participation will remain problematic.

Black gains.

The Voting Rights Act was passed in August 1965 after violent clashes between police and civil rights workers in Selma, Ala., had dramatized the need for federal intervention to secure black voting rights. The Act, passed after 25 days of debate and 27 roll call votes in the Senate, gave the Justice Department authority to appoint federal examiners to enforce a ban on racial discrimination in voting.

The Act's controversial Section Five stipulated that states that had literacy tests in effect in 1964 and had less than 50 percent voter registration would have to submit any changes in their electoral laws to the Justice Department for pre-clearance. Nine Southern states came under this provision.

In 1975, the Voting Rights Act was extended through August 1982, and its protections were extended to language minorities—in particular, Hispanics. Bilingual ballots were required, and Arizona, Texas and parts of California and Florida came under the pre-clearance provisions.

The Voting Rights Act has had notable success. Black registration in the 11 Southern states of the Confederacy rose from 29.4 percent in 1960 to 57.4 percent in 1976. In Mississippi, it went from 6.7 percent in 1964 to 67.4 percent in 1976. Prior to 1964, there were fewer than 100 black elected officials in the South; today there are more than 2,400, including the mayors of Birmingham, Richmond, Atlanta and New Orleans.

Among Hispanics, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project found a 29.5 percent increase nationally in registration from 1976 to 1980 and a 44 percent increase in the Southwest. Hispanic victories in San Antonio's City Council and mayoral elections were the result of Voting Rights Act reforms.

White roadblocks.

But neither blacks nor Hispanics have yet won full political rights. While blacks make up about 25 percent of the South's population, they are represented by only 2 percent of its Congressional delegation and 3 percent of its mayors and state senators. Mississippi and South Carolina, which are about one-third black, have not elected a black member to Congress since Reconstruction.

Some of the problem has been the need

for candidate and voter education, but roadblocks have also been thrown up by white-dominated city and state governments against black and Hispanic candidates. In Mississippi, South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana, Congressional districts divide the black vote in such a way as to prevent a black majority candidate. Attempts this year to carve out majority-black districts in Mississippi's Delta, New Orleans and Atlanta have been defeated by state legislatures and are now in the courts. In Texas, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund has taken the state to court for its plan to pack the Hispanic vote into one South Texas district rather than into two districts in which Hispanics would make up more than 60 percent in each.

Within towns and cities, the forms of discrimination include annexation (where white suburbs are added to cities to counteract black majorities) and at-large or multi-member city council and statehouse elections (which prevent significant

minorities of blacks and Hispanics from winning any seats). Two of the more blatant examples are in Indianola, Miss., and Petersburg, Va.

In 1965, blacks made up 70 percent of Indianola's 10,000 citizens. Seven months before the Voting Rights Act passed, Indianola's white City Council annexed seven white suburban neighborhoods. Other annexations took place in 1966, 1967 and 1968, while black homes in Indianola were repeatedly being condemned and blacks were being forced to move outside the city limits. By 1980, blacks made up only 48 percent of Indianola's population and had only managed to elect one alderman in at-large elections.

But a lawsuit brought this year, charging that the town had failed to secure pre-clearance for its post-1965 annexations, resulted in a District Court order revoking the annexations. In last week's mayoral election, fought over the issue of annexations, a black candidate, Alsee McDaniel, lost by only 55 votes.

In Petersburg, Va., 61 percent of the town's 41,000 citizens are black, but whites control the city council four-to-three and appoint the mayor by virtue of carefully-drawn wards that minimize the black vote. Mayor LeRoy B. Roper refers to the black officials as "boys" and has blocked funds for the town's schools and for public housing. A new redistricting plan is expected to increase the white's City Council edge to five-to-two.

The main hope for Petersburg's blacks has been the Voting Rights Act. In 1973, the Justice Department blocked a City

Council annexation plan, and it is now considering the new redistricting plan.

House victory.

When the Voting Rights Act came up for renewal this year, civil rights organizations feared opposition from the Reagan administration and from moderate Republicans. But lobbying and Wayne Dowdy's upset victory in the July 7 election to fill the Mississippi House seat vacated by Rep. John Hinson scared both. The Democrat Dowdy's majority came from an unprecedented turnout among blacks, who were moved by his support for the Voting Rights Act, which his opponent opposed.

After Dowdy's election, the administration announced a wait-and-see attitude, and House Republicans, led by ranking Judiciary Committee member Henry Hyde, began to seek a compromise with the Democratic leadership. But the Democrats, led by Don Edwards, Peter Rodino and Harold Washington, found it unnecessary to compromise with Hyde's desires to weaken Section Five. What one aide described as "the strongest possible bill" was reported out of the Judiciary Committee and adopted 389-24 on the House floor.

Pre-clearance was continued, and the five-year period when states could "bail out" if they showed a record of non-discrimination was extended to 10 years. To counteract the Supreme Court's ruling in *Mobile v. Bolden* that aggrieved parties must show intent to discriminate, the House bill stipulated that an aggrieved party need only show a law had been imposed "in a manner which results" in voting discrimination.

But the House victory margin, which included support from 71 Southern Democrats, most Northern Republicans and the likes of California Congressmen Barry Goldwater Jr. and Robert Dornan, could turn out to be a repeat of the AWACS vote, where many pro-administration House members, seeing that the AWACS sale would be defeated in the House, climbed on the political bandwagon on the assumption that the real fight would be in the Senate.

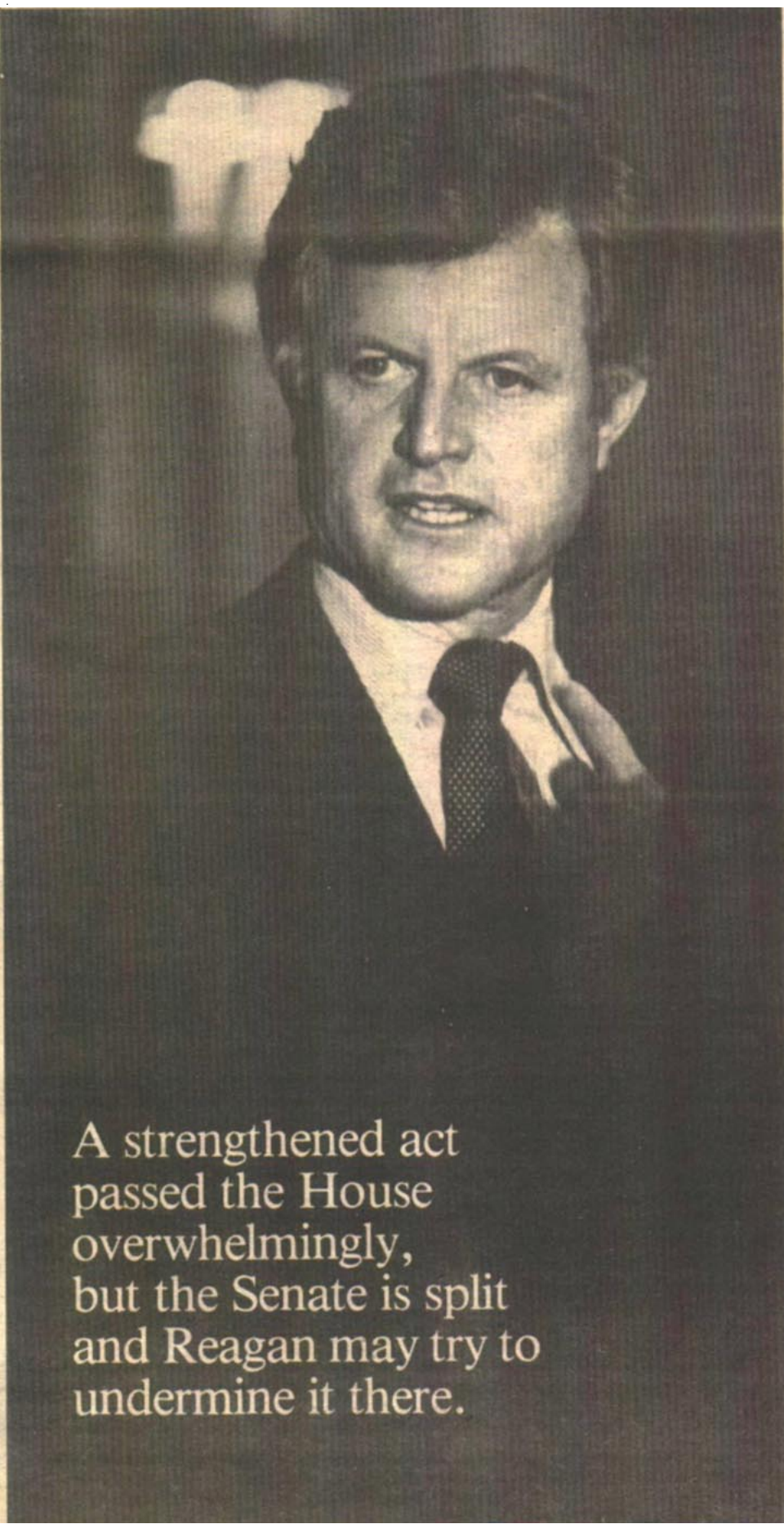
There are already indications that the Act, which must pass through Utah Republican Orrin Hatch's Subcommittee on the Constitution and Strom Thurmond's Judiciary Committee, will encounter much more serious opposition than it did in the House. Thurmond is on record opposing Section Five, and both he and the Administration want the Act to make enforcement depend on demonstration of intent rather than simply results.

Thurmond's strategy for gutting Section Five will consist of demanding that all states submit their electoral changes for pre-clearance. This would be tantamount to making the Act unenforceable. Thurmond will also try to remove jurisdiction of voting rights cases from the District of Columbia federal court to federal courts in the region affected.

But the most vulnerable part of the House bill may be the "results" vs. "intent" amendment. Reagan reportedly told a group of civil rights leaders that he thought the country ought to "stick with the court's ruling"—a position he does not often take with respect to court decisions. A Reagan-Thurmond victory on this point could doom the Act. "Nobody is going to admit they discriminate in this day and age," the NAACP's Althea Simmons said.

But there are also differences between the dynamics of Voting Rights and of the AWACS vote. With AWACS, Senate approval was sufficient. With Voting Rights, Senate opposition will have to be matched in conference by near-unanimous House support. And Reagan's intervention will have to be quieter and less forceful than it was in the case of AWACS.

"The President's position won't be damaging because he is coming out too late," Simmons said. "The fact that we were able to carry the House so overwhelmingly gives us a tremendous advantage."



A strengthened act passed the House overwhelmingly, but the Senate is split and Reagan may try to undermine it there.

IN SHORT

Copulo, ergo sum

Some people can't keep their minds off sex. A recent case in point (reported by Brooks Egerton): Florida legislator Alan Trask sponsored an amendment to the state's higher-education budget aimed at curbing the number of gay groups on campus. After all, Trask reasoned, "we don't allow murderers and thieves to advocate criminal activity on the campuses." The wording of the so-called Trask-Bush Amendment was less specific, prohibiting state funding of schools that allow member organizations to "recommend or advocate sexual relations between persons not married to each other."

The University of South Florida's student senate quickly picked up the gauntlet—first by passing a resolution endorsing the forbidden act, then by forming a club called Sigma Epsilon Chi (the Greek acronym is SEX). SEX won official recognition by the university, so the state comptroller moved to cut off the school's funds. USF's president blocked the cutoff with a federal court injunction; state commissioner of education Ralph Turlington also sued the comptroller in circuit court.

Turlington's argument, based on First Amendment free-speech rights, was rejected by Judge John Rudd, who ruled that the Trask-Bush Amendment meant only "that educational funds are to be used to educate students, not to provide recognition for...groups to advocate sexual relations." As the story now stands, Turlington's appeal of Rudd's decision may win on a technicality, according to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. But Alan Trask's campus crusade has only begun: He promises to offer a bill in the next legislative session banning all campus groups that "recommend or advocate actions which are against the law."

Slide to salvation

In their constant battle against high fuel costs, airlines have done everything from cutting the number of in-flight magazines to using ever-flimsier blankets. But now, reports the Pacific News Service, 15 airlines have asked permission to dump the 1,000-pound life rafts on so-called "coastal" routes. That's going too far, according to the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA). ALPA notes that those flights sometimes travel more than 150 miles from land, well beyond the swimming capacity of most non-amphibious passengers. As a compromise, some aircraft are being fitted with escape slides that can double as emergency life rafts.

Inside Interior

Eleven of the top 16 officials appointed by President Reagan to head the Department of the Interior—including Secretary James Watt—have been employed by or served clients in the five major industries regulated by the department, according to a guide released by the Washington-based group Common Cause. Oil and gas interests have the best representation at Interior—seven of the 16 higher-ups report previous professional affiliation with that industry. The guide, called "Who's Minding the Store?," also reports that

- six officials listed past affiliation with the mining industry;
- three recorded former association with the utilities industry;
- three had been professionally associated with the timber industry; and
- two showed past professional affiliation with the livestock industry.

"Officials of the Interior Department serve as trustees for the American people of more than 500 million acres of federal land," commented Common Cause president Fred Wertheimer. "But a look at the employment histories and financial interests of the new management team at Interior shows a disproportionately industry-oriented perspective." According to Common Cause, only two of Interior's top brass have a relatively clean slate—they have no previous professional affiliations with the major regulated industries, have not been required to disqualify themselves from any departmental decisions and have not been ordered to divest stock holdings.

Occupation of Western banks

Who runs TV? The Bankers Trust, says PNS. The New York bank is the top stockholder in all three networks, though it's not the only financial institution that owns a share of CBS, ABC and NBC: According to a study by the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, three-quarters of the networks' major stockholders are banks—including Chase Manhattan, Morgan Guaranty Trust, Citibank and Bank of America.

Holiday hint

According to the *Manchester Guardian* (via PNS), recession-pinched parents in England have been telling their children that it is better to steal than to receive. Exeter police sergeant Terry Needham (not a person widely known for making up this kind of thing) says that parents are giving schoolkids Christmas shopping lists of items to steal, and the enterprising youths have set up their own network to share information about which stores are the easiest marks.

—Josh Kornbluth



A Salvadoran refugee looks back at his family as he and others are led away at gunpoint by Salvadoran soldiers. This scene, which took place on Nov. 16, was repeated at two other refugee camps in the La Virtud region of Honduras. The victims of these raids, who later said they had expected to be killed when returned to El Salvador, were released after foreign visitors to the camps confronted the soldiers and threatened an international protest.

Mozambique: a splice of life

Last year film lovers in Maputo, Mozambique, watched such films as *Apocalypse Now*, *The Alamo* and golden oldies from Hollywood. *Superman II* was not shown, and it won't be—not because the Mozambican film institute objects, but because the U.S.-based Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA) doesn't ship major studio films to the socialist African nation, ever since contract negotiations fell through. The film institute wants only a third of the 10 or so films it imports each year to be American, while the MPEA proposed importing a minimum of 150 American films.

"But we don't mind," said Pedro Pimenta, assistant director of the film institute, who with filmmaker Camilo de Sousa is on a tour of the U.S. with a demonstration packet of Mozambican films. "We would rather see the work of independent American filmmakers." Next year, *The War at Home* and *El Salvador: Another Vietnam* will be among the films shown (for the normal token entrance fee) in Mozambique's 35 movie houses and also, with portable screens and projectors on truckbeds, in the countryside.

The unofficial MPEA boycott is only one of the trials faced by Mozambican filmmakers. Another is the agony of scraping up foreign exchange to buy filmstock and to ship color film (for the rare production in color) outside the country to be developed. Then there is the equipment nightmare. The 80-person institute staff makes do with ancient, second-hand machines, and one of them—a printer—finally expired.

The death of the 25-year-old printer inspired the U.S. tour, during which the filmmakers hope to raise \$10,000 to buy a new one.

In spite of all the obstacles, 70 films have been made since the institute was founded in 1976, five of them feature-length and all documentaries. Film is a cru-

cial educational medium in a country where Portuguese is a common language among widely differing cultures and where few people are literate. The films report such subjects as military threats to the border, celebration of national festivals and working conditions in basic industry.

One documentary—*Mueda*, directed by Ruy Guerra (who worked for years in Brazil's cinema novo movement) and produced by de Sousa—simply records a play staged annually by residents of Mueda, a Mozambican border town. The residents reenact a 1960 massacre by colonialists, preserving history while mocking their old oppressors.

Institute filmmakers decide collectively what films to produce. "Until recently, however," said Pimenta, "we've been so frantic getting the basics done that we've barely had a chance to ask how best to do it."

Unlike the MPEA, the Mozambicans are delighted to export their films, which have been bought throughout Africa and by most of European TV. In the U.S., though, the films are still hard to find.

The Mozambicans aren't daunted. They have a long-practiced phrase: "*A luta continua*"—the struggle continues. They say it at the end of every film showing.

—Pat Aufderheide

For more information, write to Positive Productions, 48 Q St., NE, Washington, DC; or call (202) 529-0220.

Wisconsin bill aids gay rights

MADISON, WI—Wisconsin stands on the verge of becoming the first state in the nation to pass a ban on discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

Legislation outlawing the denial of employment, housing or public accommodation on grounds of sexual orientation cleared the state assembly in late October, and the bill's supporters expect the state senate to give it the nod in early January. (Two other states—California

and Pennsylvania—prohibit discrimination against homosexuals, but only by the more fragile mechanism of executive order.)

State Rep. David Clarenbach (D-Madison), the bill's primary sponsor, called on gay-rights and other social activists to "get back on the offensive." Some "rear guard" measures against the New Right have been necessary, he said, but "this legislation will help provide some momentum" in the other direction.

Clarenbach lauded the support of a "total cross-section of the religious community" as instrumental to his work. The lineup is striking: It includes, for example, an Episcopal bishop, the Wisconsin Baptist State Convention and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The key to Clarenbach's strategy was defining this "bigotry"—not homosexuality—as the issue at stake. "The point is not whether homosexuality is admirable; the issue is whether discrimination is tolerable," he wrote to his assembly colleagues. Thus he was able to get religious support for the concept of civil rights, while still allowing churches and legislators to get off the hook of accusations that they condone sin.

This emphasis was wise: A recent move to decriminalize all consensual adult sex acts was narrowly defeated in Wisconsin—even though some 25 states have already set an example in this area. But the Wisconsin legislation, with provision of explicit legal recourse for gays and lesbians, will probably prove a more effective tool than a decriminalization ordinance. "It will expand tremendously the number of cases where people have a remedy," said Grid Hall, a state public defender and president of the Madison Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.

—Brooks Egerton

Original articles, news clips, memos, press releases, reports anecdotes—send them all to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622. Please include your address and phone number.

DU PONT

The Steelworkers take on a tough one



George Painter, former president of an independent union at Du Pont's Chattanooga plant

By David Moberg

CHATTANOOGA

GARY POTTER HAS WORKED as a welder at Du Pont's hulking Dacron factory in Old Hickory, Tenn., on the outskirts of Nashville, for 19 years. His father, now retired, worked there before him. Both live nearby.

Since the factory was constructed in the 1930s to manufacture rayon, the workforce has been linked by such family and community ties. Du Pont built the town of Old Hickory and laid it out along carefully stratified lines, leading from upper-management homes near the river on back to the lesser homes of average workers. Many of the original employees were grateful to have any job in those difficult times. Du Pont rewarded individual loyalties in many cases and generally paid among the top manufacturing wages in the area.

The company union, including management and production workers, was changed in 1937 into a weak independent "employees council" that served the needs of management as much, or more, than those of workers, despite the good intentions of some leaders. As the beneficent side of Du Pont's paternal management faded away, Potter decided that the council was a "dead horse" and decided to support a bid by the United Steelworkers to represent the 1,653 "wage roll" workers at Old Hickory.

Then one Sunday, he recalls, "my wife and I went over to have dinner with my parents after church. My father asked me to come outside because he was going to give me something. Instead he sat me down to give me a good tongue-lashing. He told me how good Du Pont was, how I was raised in the shadow of Du Pont, how they paid for our car and for my clothes. I just couldn't be for the union. Later my mother got to crying. She said the plant would shut down if the union came in and Old Hickory will be a ghost town. The whole damn family turned on me. I didn't appreciate that."

Potter was still for a national union as he and 12,000 other workers at 14 Du Pont plants voted last week on whether to make the Steelworkers their bargaining representative. It was one of the most formidable tests yet of the capacity of Du Pont's paternalistic labor policy to beat back efforts of national unions to crack the 179-year-old giant of the American chemical industry, which had just swallowed Conoco in one \$7.5 billion gulp.

Du Pont has long been a prime labor target: according to the company, there have been 235 national union elections since 1940 at Du Pont plants, but only 13 factories with 5 percent of the companies' employees belong to these unions (the International Chemical Workers is the biggest with 2,200 members at five Du Pont plants). Another 34 percent of the 66,000

Du Pont wage workers belong to independent unions. Eight of the 12 plants voting last week had no union; independents existed at the others.

Gary Potter's experience was only one indication of how Du Pont exploits its history of control of the workforce to keep out unions. A few weeks before the scheduled vote, retirees received notice of a pension increase (12 percent plus one-half percent for each year since retirement), the first in several years. Du Pont included a note encouraging them to dissuade anyone they knew from supporting the Steelworkers.

Du Pont has long exploited a variety of techniques to keep its workers docile, according to Gerard Zilg, author of *Du Pont: Behind the Nylon Curtain*: hiring indentured French servants in the early years, sponsoring churches to keep Irish workers disciplined, constructing company towns and establishing spy systems after the Civil War, initiating company unions from 1919 to World War II, building nonunion plants in the South or moving overseas since then. During the postwar years, the independent unions have at times become restive, occasionally striking and futilely attempting to form an effective federation, but Du Pont fought their new assertiveness.

George Painter was president of the independent union at the Chattanooga plant from 1956 to 1958. "The company likes a controlled independent," he said, "because they can feel the pulse all the time." But when Painter was elected he told local managers, "You may ruin the union, but you're not going to run it." The personnel manager's response to Painter was succinct: "We might as well have a national union as have this."

the old District 50 of the United Mine Workers, the Steelworkers started a low-key educational campaign at Du Pont. After they were decertified at one plant where they proved no more effective than the old councils, they concluded that in order to be effective in dealing with Du Pont and consequently persuading workers to join a national union, the union would have to represent from the outset a large bloc of Du Pont factories and enforce national bargaining.

But the strategy also posed problems. Unions need to get a vote as quickly as possible once workers show enthusiasm for a union. Delays give the company time to work and morale subsides from its high pitch. "You can't keep the pot boiling and expect the water to stay there," one union supporter at Old Hickory observed. Steelworkers consequently have lost support they once had in some Northern factories.

In October 1980, under pressure from local organizing groups anxious for a vote, the Steelworkers decided to call for elections simultaneously at as many plants as signed—or signed for a second time—union authorization cards. Sixteen met the requirement, and the Steelworkers sought a consolidated vote, which the company opposed. So the union requested that the different sites, combined under one NLRB jurisdiction, conduct separate elections during the same week with the tallies all made at the end of the week (Dec. 11). After disputes over the definition of bargaining units in two cases, the total dropped to 14 (three in Tennessee and New Jersey, two in North Carolina, West Virginia and Delaware, and one each in South Carolina and Ohio).

Ron Moore, now president of the Old Hickory Employees Council, at first opposed the Steelworkers and wanted simply to link existing independents, but "the farther I've got down the line, the more I saw we didn't have money, time, or skills to form a big organization. The thing that makes people feel the need for a stronger union is that we don't bargain major changes at the site, like pensions. They take away our dignity. You know if you ask for a wage increase, you're on your belly. You know if you go out,

the largest and most long-lived family businesses in the U.S.—with an authoritarian management that could be personally benevolent or vindictive—and one of the initiators of the modern style of corporate management under Pierre S. Du Pont during the early part of the century.

But the cold, impersonal manner now dominates. And the feeling among workers that somebody up there was looking out for them is dying out. Many workers talk about how everything began to go downhill in the early '70s when, for the first time in the company's history, there were no more Du Ponts in the top management. Those years also happened to be less profitable times for the company, spurring on the hard-line approach and increased interest in a union.

Although Du Pont has implied that the Steelworkers are the cause of the mill closings and job losses in the steel industry, Du Pont has also greatly reduced the workforce in many of its plants and shut down others, often to move South or overseas. Local organizers in Chattanooga claim that management docu-

Ron Moore is president of the Old Hickory Employees Council, a company-sponsored union. He now supports the Steelworkers.



David Moberg



David Moberg

Du Pont has long resisted union attempts to organize its plants. The Old Hickory plant shown here is part of a town built by the company and long run paternalistically.

Shortly afterwards the local union was decertified in a three-way race that the Textile Workers Union—which Painter supported—narrowly lost. Since then the Textile Workers and the Teamsters (twice) have been back and lost, at times narrowly.

The Teamsters suffered from Du Pont's emphasis on their image as corrupt and violent, but Du Pont also resorted to its own tough tactics: earlier this year an administrative judge found Du Pont guilty of nine counts of unfair labor practices in fighting the Teamsters in 1979. Judge James Fitzpatrick said that Du Pont "is shown to have a proclivity for violating the [National Labor Relations] Act and has engaged in widespread misconduct demonstrating a general disregard of employee statutory rights."

Nearly eight years ago, after absorbing

1,700 people can't hurt Du Pont."

Du Pont sets wages according to local pay rates. (At Old Hickory workers earn from \$7.14 to \$11.14 an hour and average \$9.30.) So workers in similar jobs in different parts of the country may be paid rates that vary \$2 an hour or more. Also, many Du Pont workers argue that they are falling behind other major factories in their areas and not keeping up with inflation. They also complain about Du Pont's arbitrary change in their health insurance from \$100 deductible to \$300 deductible.

At both Chattanooga and Old Hickory, however, workers appeared interested in a national union not only because they wanted bargaining power and better pay and benefits but equally because the old paternalistic system of control had broken down. Du Pont was both one of

ments they obtained show that another 390 workers are soon to be laid off there, but not until after the union election. By 1986 the workforce of 2,200 would be cut in half. There have been hundreds of layoffs in recent years as Du Pont contracted out many operations to smaller, low-wage firms.

Those who keep their jobs feel that they are subjected to increasingly arbitrary control. "Five years ago I wouldn't have thought about a national union," John Anderson, a 25-year veteran of Old Hickory said. "I'll be honest: we've always had a reasonably good deal here financially. But our supervisors have got so they don't give a damn about how they treat people. Our contract isn't worth the paper it's printed on. Their attitude has changed so much. We used to have re-

Continued on the following page

Du Pont

Continued from page 5

spect on both sides. We had problems, but we could work it out."

Local president Moore noted that the union filed more than 300 grievances last year. "We may have won five," he said. "Even a blind hog will find an acorn now and then. But we couldn't have been wrong that many times." The final decision is made by the assistant plant manager, unless the union wants to spend \$4,000 to take a case to arbitration. It did nine times last year and lost only one.

As discontent and sentiment in favor of a national union grew, management at Old Hickory developed an elaborate plan of counterinsurgency and surveillance under the general title of the "Employee Relations Venture Plan." Last spring a sheaf of memos on the subject was stuffed through the mail slot one night at the Old Hickory Employees Council.

Parts of the Venture Plan documents show that management had surveyed enough workers to know that they were concerned about "wages, salaries, in-

volvement in the management process, energy supply, inflation, Management/Council Union relationship, controlling, impersonal relationship" and "other changes. Top management was seen as 'hardnosed and inflexible by a majority of employees.' Many workers, especially the 16.5 percent who were black, felt that the independent union was ineffective and wanted corporate-wide bargaining, the documents acknowledged.

Management responded to these worker grievances with a "Know Your Employee" program to collect information on each worker in order to "predict individual actions in different situations and more effectively to direct and influence these actions in support of Management objectives." Some of the typical questions for employee analysis were: "What type of people influence this employee? Does employee have any relatives, friends, etc., who may have an influence over employee? Does the employee feel a National Union will benefit him/her? Is employee prejudiced towards any group? What are the employee's interests outside the plant (hunting, bowling, etc.)? Is there an individual who this employee associates with in these activities that influences him/her?

Do you know of any 'personal problems' employee is having?" Files included information on drinking and sexual habits.

"That really upset people," Gary Potter said. "That's no way to run a damn business. All they should be concerned about is am I doing my job."

Du Pont also prepared a detailed two-month pre-election plan to fight the Steelworkers, including assigning the industrial relations director the task of establishing a "For Independent Council Committee" that would supposedly represent the spontaneous outpouring of worker opposition. As implemented, the plan has been predictable in its emphasis: the classic trio of "strikes, dues and assessments," reminders of how well Du Pont has treated employees, discrediting of the Steelworkers (high pay for union officials, loss of jobs in steel) and arguments on behalf of local control through the Employees Council. Supervisors eased pressure and tried to be cooperative: "It's like a resort in there now," one Chattanooga worker said.

At Chattanooga the spokesman for the "Concerned Employees," David Pike, explained his anti-union position: "Well, I feel the United Steelworkers can't help us 'cause we've got good benefits and

they can't get us more without the extra costs of union dues. We've got an Industrial Relations Committee we can go to, and if we're not satisfied with that we can go higher. They've always been fair with me. It's a real good place." Although pro-union workers complain of unequal treatment and favoritism in the plant, there's another side of the story: favorites or would-be favorites form an anti-union core.

But some workers at Chattanooga wonder just how good the place is. Earlier this year some maintenance workers who had been dismantling asbestos insulation and had heard of dangers of asbestos contacted an outside doctor. Although they contend the company's annual X-rays, which they had not been able to see, indicated lung problems for many years, they had not been warned of potential asbestosis. At least 100 workers since then have been diagnosed as suffering from the disease. Du Pont continues to minimize its responsibility. One supervisor, Dale Merris, was quoted by workers as denying there was any asbestosis in the plant and as telling workers "that is what the hairs in your nose are for" (to filter asbestos dust) and "if I felt the way you do, I would quit and get myself another damn job."

The charge of Du Pont negligence stings since workers had trusted the company, which has a highly-regarded safety program touted by a sign across the front of the facility: World's Safest Plant: 7 Million Safe Hours. Even without the asbestosis scandal, which has boosted union interest, the reputation had picked up some blemishes. A recent Council on Economic Priorities study of occupational safety and health in the chemical industry found that, on the basis of OSHA statistics, Du Pont was the worst of all the big chemical companies, a ranking "corroborated further by its extremely high level of willful violations." Even the company's relative good record on lost time due to injuries may be illusory: Du Pont workers repeatedly refer to the "wounded brigade" of workers brought back on the job while still recovering. Also, many complained, as Ray Fugate of Chattanooga did, that "they brag about their disability plan, but if you use it, you're called on the carpet and written up for discipline."

Steelworker prospects.

The Steelworkers need victory in a majority of the plants that voted last week to make their ambition for corporate bargaining credible and to give their further organizing efforts a boost. Already they are a major power in chemical industry unionization, with 60,000 workers represented. "I'd expect there'd be a large-scale movement," organizing director John Oshinski said, speculating on prospects if a Steelworker sweep occurred. "This would trigger activity in those other places." If the corporation accepts unified bargaining, the Steelworkers have offered to give up the right to strike in favor of outside arbitration of unresolved issues.

Du Pont's paternalism has been successful, but when the company feels the need to lay off workers, shut down plants, contract out work, take short-cuts on safety and health, increase discipline on the shop floor and trim back its traditionally competitive wages and benefits in order to keep their profits up, cracks in the old system open for a more effective unionism.

As workers in Chattanooga voted last week, there was a radio message from E.C. Bull, a longtime advocate of a national union in the plant. In its own way, it got to the heart of the campaign, the question of whether workers need to organize for their own interests or can trust the company:

"Hi. Take it from an old country boy that's worked at Du Pont about 32 years. I had a hog and every day I'd go down the trail and feed him. He saw me coming down with slop in my hand. He'd say, 'Here comes my friend.' One day I had the slop in one hand and my gun in the other. Bang. The moral of this story is, Just because your boss smiles at you every morning doesn't mean he's your friend. Vote for the Steelworkers and be somethings besides a number."

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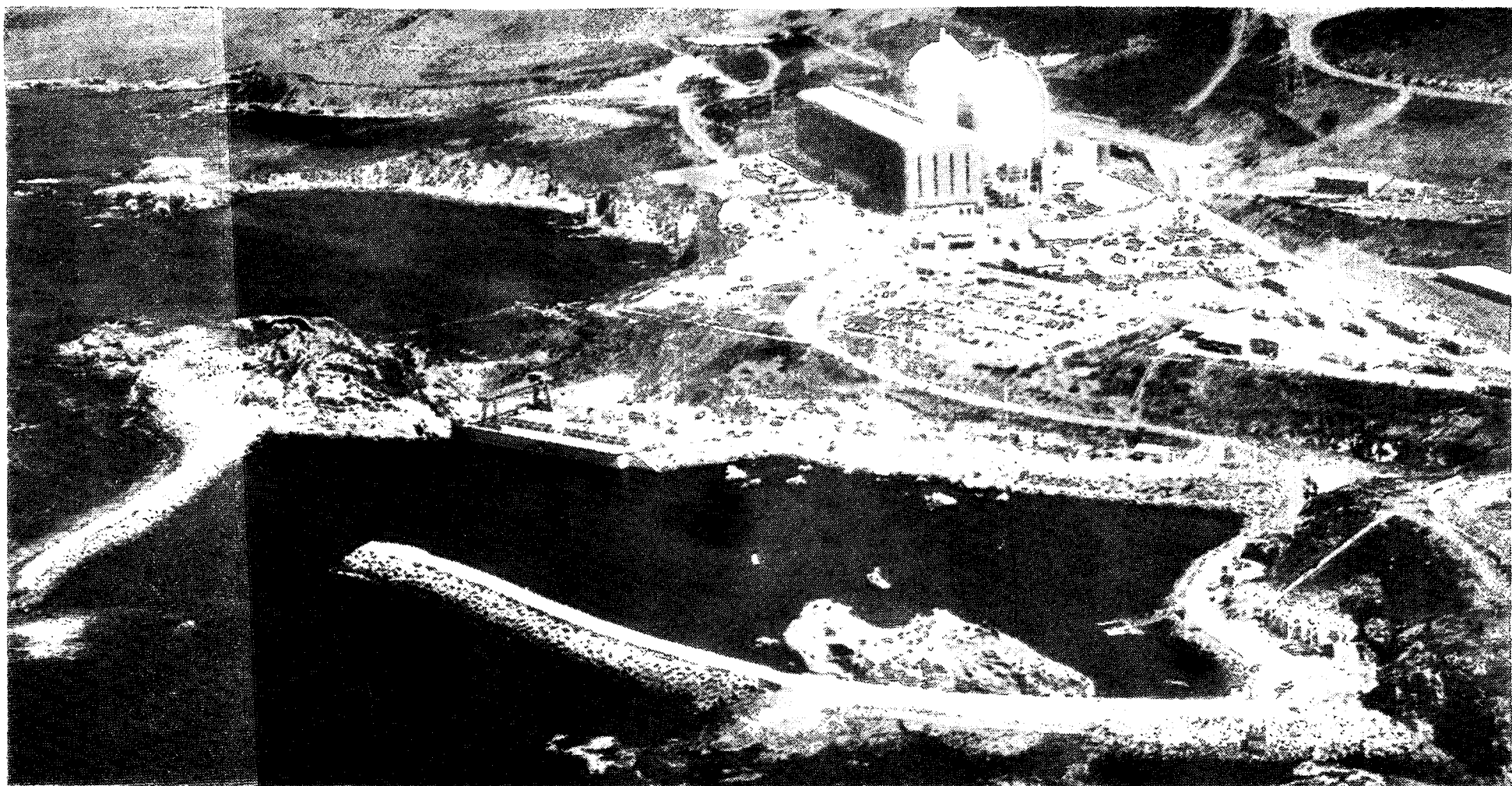
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The NRC inspector did not check the Diablo Canyon reactor's design. He assumed the blueprints were correct and simply verified the calculations.

NUCLEAR POWER

Sloppy design and poor NRC review plague Diablo

By G. Pascal Zachary

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA

LATE ONE AFTERNOON IN SEPTEMBER a young engineer's curiosity got the best of him. Ever since, things haven't been the same at Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), the nation's largest private utility and the owner of the controversial Diablo Canyon nuclear plant in San Luis Obispo.

While reviewing diagrams in PG&E's San Francisco headquarters, 25-year-old John L. Horn Jr. inadvertently discovered a major design error in Diablo's earthquake bracing plans—an error that for four years had gone undetected by other company engineers and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

PG&E acknowledged the error just before the windup of a three-week blockade of the plant by the Abalone Alliance in September. Because of the error, fuel loading and reactor testing have been delayed indefinitely. An unprecedented investigation of the plant's basic design is now in progress. To date, more than a dozen additional design flaws and problems in the \$2.4 billion plant have been discovered.

Embarrassed company officials, who throughout the Abalone Alliance protest had called the plant "the most studied in the world," kept Horn's identity a secret for weeks.

But in early November the engineer went public. At a press conference Horn spoke hesitantly to reporters. "There was no whistle-blowing. I did everything within the company, and the news came out. There was no attempt by anyone to cover up any of this," he said.

A few days after Horn's discovery, a company vice-president assured him that he wouldn't lose his job. But Horn said that some co-workers have been "cool" toward him.

The Diablo plant—only days after Horn found the error—received a test license from the NRC and a full operating license secured just months away. Now the plant probably won't be tested until next year, after the required repairs have been made.

This is just the latest in a series of delays that have plagued Diablo since construction began in 1968 and that have sent the cost of the plant skyrocketing. PG&E initially expected to spend \$350 million on the two-reactor facility. But after geologists found a major earthquake fault within three miles of the then nearly-completed plant, the NRC required extensive modifications so that it could withstand a 7.5 Richter Scale earthquake.

During this round of costly changes the newly-found design errors were made. All the mistakes involve the plant's reinforced seismic safety supports. The one discovered by Horn involves braces designed to prevent pipes within the reactor from collapsing during a quake.

Oops.

While other errors are also considered to be serious, the pipe-brace has caused the most alarm because it means that five key reactor safety systems, including those designed to prevent a core meltdown, do not meet seismic safety standards.

The NRC has been particularly embarrassed by this problem because it is an area studied in detail by its own staff. The appearance of the problem calls into question not only PG&E's quality assurance program—which one company vice-president admitted "had been clearly violated" by the design errors—but also the commission's.

"The NRC is fully aware that there has been a history of pipe support problems at Diablo," said Richard Hubbard, a former General Electric nuclear engineer now working with opponents of the plant. "A year or so ago, we were assured that these problems were over."

"You can't put a lot of weight on the commission's reviews," Hubbard added. "Their people look at the quality of the paperwork and not at the quality of the plant."

The review mentioned by Hubbard was ordered after the NRC had shut down five nuclear plants because an improper computer formula used to design the plants had led to inadequate support for

the cooling system pipes—the same trouble now plaguing Diablo. At the time, the commission told PG&E to check its plant's pipe supports against construction blueprints for discrepancies. In August 1980, the company reported that more than one out of every four pipe supports did not match the blueprints. Supports were missing, weights were wrong or incorrectly located. But not having run a check on the blueprints themselves, the company did not learn that they, too, were incorrect.

PG&E contends that it should be excused for not finding the error, which occurred in 1977 when utility officials sent a consultant the wrong data for the plant's seismic redesign. But Hubbard and other critics argue that the company should have checked the calculations upon which the blueprints were based.

These critics also charge that NRC inspectors should have made sure the review was done. "I know if I were in charge of that place [Diablo] and I was faced with a series of [NRC] bulletins," said Bob Pollard, a former NRC inspector now with the Union of Concerned Scientists, "that would have caused me to do a more thorough assessment to be sure there were no problems."

But the NRC inspector in charge of this review "assumed" the blueprints were correct. "That's right. I assumed they were correct," Dennis Kirsch said. "You have to assume it has been properly reviewed and that it is the design that will accomplish seismic loading."

Kirsch added that he "did verify that [PG&E] had a system to verify design calculations." He said that "it appeared to be working."

According to Edward L. Jordan, deputy director of the NRC's inspection division, Kirsch's review was typical. "We're not able to recalculate every mathematical equation," Jordan said. "We can only spot-check."

The commission's review works "hand in hand" with the utility's more extensive inspection program, he explained.

But according to an investigation published last month in the San Jose *Mercury-News*, PG&E's quality control program has a wide range of flaws. The *Mercury-News* report—based on interviews with former inspectors—told of:

- Blueprints that did not match what was installed.

- Improper welding approved by inspectors.

- Federal regulators being given a "guided tour" of the best constructed areas.

- Inspectors being asked to sign reports without inspecting the work.

"In general, nothing [that we inspected] was rejected," the *Mercury-News* quoted one former inspector as saying.

The paper reported that another former inspector said that instead of fixing things, the sub-contractor—with PG&E's approval—often would simply arrange to alter the building specifications so the errors would be in compliance.

Despite the seriousness of Diablo's design flaws and the reports of a serious breakdown in PG&E's quality control program, the NRC has responded cautiously, adopting a two-track approach to the plant.

On the one hand, after two months of studying the plant's design errors, the Commission decided to suspend the facilities license until a review can be completed. In issuing this ruling on Nov. 19, the NRC blamed PG&E for errors. Nevertheless it asked the utility to coordinate the design review.

On the other hand, the Commission has continued to press ahead with plans to grant the plant a full power license without so much as a pause to digest the recent events at Diablo. A final hearing on this issue has been set for Jan. 19, and a full operating license could be issued by next spring.

Plant opponents are pleased with the Commission's unprecedented suspension of the plant's test license, but they have played down the significance of this action in light of the commission's apparent determination not to let current problems at Diablo delay the issuance of a full power license.

Opponents have also questioned the terms of the NRC's suspension order, saying that it should have specified that PG&E could not participate in a review of the plant's safety. California Governor Jerry Brown, for instance, has speculated that the present review might be "a whitewash." And a spokesperson for the Mothers for Peace, the San Luis Obispo group legally intervening in the Diablo case, called it "sadly inadequate."

Instead of a PG&E-run review of Diablo, Governor Brown, the Mothers for Peace and a growing number of California politicians have called on the NRC to order an independent review. So far, however, the Commission has ignored this request, insisting that—despite evidence to the contrary—their own staff can make sure PG&E provides a reliable review.

Nevertheless, plant opponents remain hopeful that the NRC will change its opposition and hold off on considering a full power license for the troubled plant until an independent review of its problems can be completed. In the words of nuclear engineer Richard Hubbard, "If the NRC fails to do this it risks finding new and even more serious problems with the plant once it goes on line."

G. Pascal Zachary is a reporter with the *Santa Barbara News & Review*.

By David Mandel

JERUSALEM

WHEN FAR-RIGHT EXTREMIST Rabbi Meir Kahane and a few followers unfurled banners in the center of Ramallah earlier this year advising the West Bank city's residents to leave their country, they were quickly rescued and politely escorted out of town by the Israeli Army. But when 200 Israeli peace activists congregated last month at the same spot in protest against the closure of the West Bank's leading university and for Palestinian self-determination alongside Israel, they were attacked without warning by troops using tear-gas grenades and clubs.

Fifty Israelis, many of them university lecturers and students, were arrested during the subsequent skirmishes in Ramallah streets, where the city's Palestinian residents enthusiastically accepted the demonstrators' leaflets. In exchange, the Arabs offered food and drink, shelter (at considerable risk to themselves) and onions to help the less experienced Israelis withstand the effects of the gas. It was the first time that Jews demonstrating in the West Bank faced the kind of treatment that is quite commonly dealt to local activists. Six of those arrested were held for two days before being released on bail, and the authorities may try all 50 for holding an illegal demonstration (there is no such thing as a legal one on the West Bank), and possibly for "attacking soldiers, shouting hostile slogans

ISRAEL

Birzeit's closure sparks opposition

because opinions expressed in it were considered "likely to harm public security." More books have been banned (the list now numbers 800); and the policy of blowing up houses has been extended for the first time to cover those belonging to families of children accused (not convicted) of throwing homemade Molotov cocktails, which failed to explode, at army vehicles.

The highly-touted "new policy" announced several months ago by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, under which collective punishment and entry by soldiers into schools were supposed to cease, and everyday life be made easier for "peaceful residents of the territories," has become a sorry joke. Its only remnant, announced by Sharon on the eve of his departure for Washington to sign a defense pact, is a quite different type of military cooperation: Israel has agreed to arm several dozen West Bank villagers who collaborate with the authorities in exchange for favored treatment but fear for their own safety. One of them, Yusuf Khatib, was assassinated in late November.

divided by the Israeli election campaign and demoralized by its outcome. The Committee for Solidarity with Birzeit University, a loose coalition of nearly all the Israeli left that grew out of previous protests on the West Bank, is busy trying to mobilize wider support for its activities, both in the occupied territories and in Israel. It is planning to continue its work even if Birzeit is allowed to reopen on Jan. 4, when the two-month closure order expires.

Birzeit University's closure following the outbreak of demonstrations near the campus last month was not the first time the army clamped down on the institution: Once before, in spring 1979, it was closed for a similar period during the unrest in the occupied territories that followed Israel's signing of the peace treaty with Egypt. And in November 1980, the school was ordered shut for a week after it refused to cooperate with censorship of cultural events scheduled for "Palestine Week." Citing instances of alleged stone-throwing each time they have clamped down, the authorities also

feared. "Will they shut them all down?" the Birzeit students ask.

"But what about the stone-throwing?" queried one of the Jewish students at the meeting, sympathetic to the plight of her counterparts across the Green Line, but affected by the intolerant response encountered among many Israelis at the Hebrew University.

"Yes, stones are sometimes thrown," Khatib admitted, "but normally, this happens only when the army shows up in force and tries to break up our demonstrations." Israel Radio and the Hebrew press do not normally report the many demonstrations held at Birzeit and elsewhere, including some quite recently. That the army simply ignores. Then, no stones are thrown, "and we are able to express our feelings," the student explained.

Cracking down.

Last time the university was closed for a long period, classes, especially for students scheduled to graduate, were organized in private homes in Ramallah and Jerusalem. But this time, the authorities have vetoed the idea, making their point with dozens of arrests, house arrests and town-confinement orders

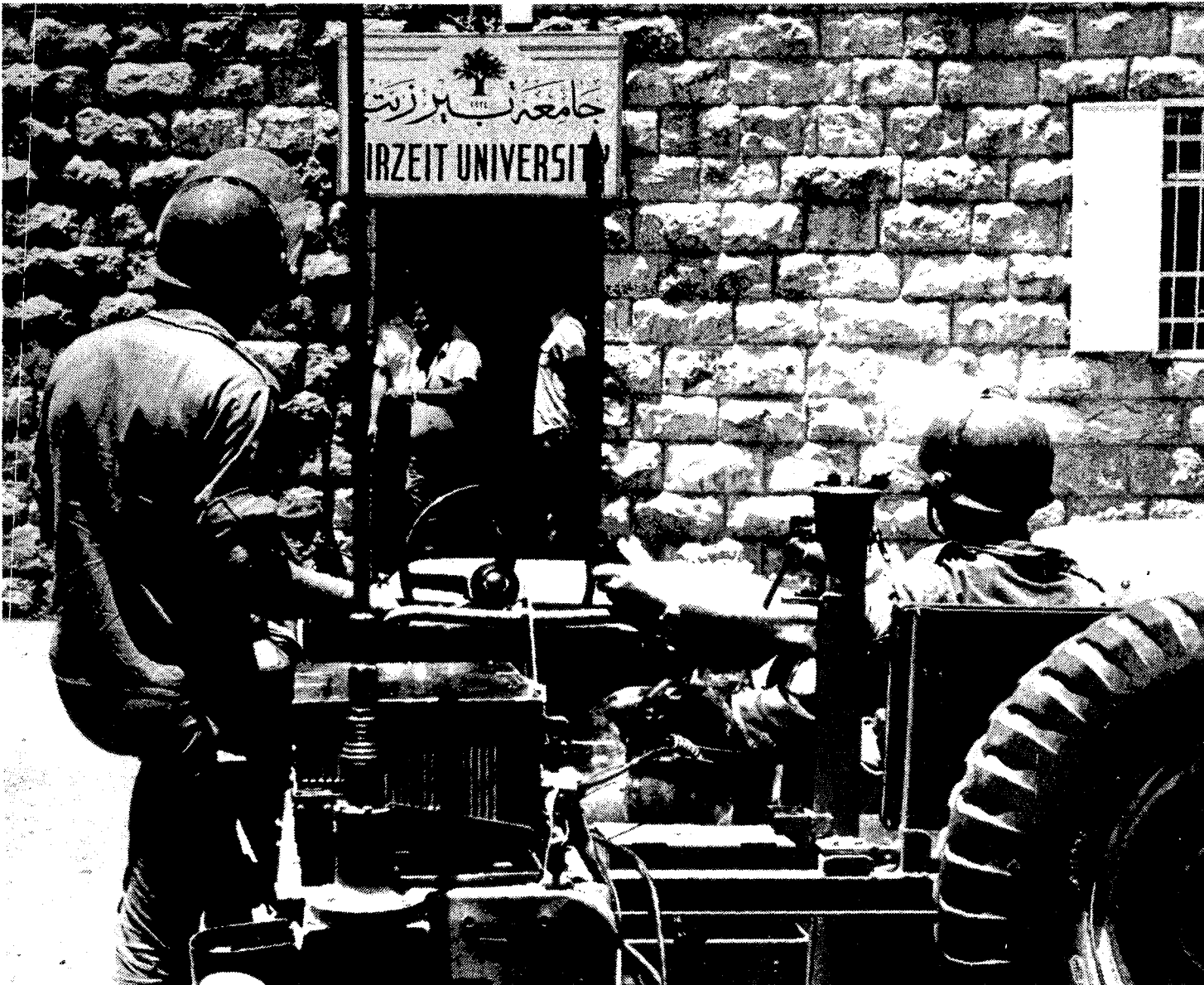
Harsh treatment of Israeli leftists is stimulating the dormant peace movement to new activity.

against faculty and students. Nevertheless, Birzeit has managed to issue mimeographed press releases about the events, and messages have presumably been sent to its many supporters abroad.

One result of Birzeit's closure probably not envisioned by the army has been closer-than-ever contact between the Palestinians involved and Israelis who oppose the occupation. The committee of solidarity formed immediately after the trouble began organized a first demonstration of 150 Israelis only three days later: converging at noon in Birzeit, they unfurled signs, began chanting slogans for the school's reopening and marched past a single surprised army patrol, climbing a wall to enter the closed campus. Later, thousands of leaflets against the closure and for Palestinian self-determination alongside Israel were distributed in surrounding villages and in Ramallah.

Besides the demonstration, regular contact has been maintained, and the cooperation has produced a press conference in Jerusalem, appearances by Birzeit people at numerous meetings in Israel, plans for several large public rallies and the classroom message quoted above. A group of lecturers from Israeli universities has issued a statement condemning the closure, and some of them are considering an attempt to offer possibly real, but at least symbolic academic lectures and classes to the locked-out students.

Some of the impetus for the professors' actions came from a report issued only weeks before the latest crisis by five Hebrew University faculty members decrying the lack of academic freedom on the West Bank: even when open, schools there have been subject to textbook censorship, visa harassment of foreign faculty and regular arrests and searches in an attempt to "prevent trouble before it starts." The report strongly disputed Israel's official allegation that Birzeit and other colleges are not seriously engaged in academics, and also discussed the practice of their closure following disturbances. This is "collective punishment," the Israelis said, and that is "unacceptable in principle." ■ *The Israeli Committee for Solidarity with Birzeit University has issued a call for contributions to a legal defense fund for those arrested in the Ramallah and any future demonstrations. Checks may be sent, made out to the committee, to POB 4412, Jerusalem.*



Israel soldiers treated Israeli peace activists roughly when they protested closing of the West Bank university in Ramallah in November.

and incitement," according to press reports.

A month of intensified strife throughout the West Bank preceded the demonstration, beginning with the imposition on Nov. 1 of "civilian-rule"—explained by Israel as a step toward limited autonomy still being negotiated with Egypt, but seen by Palestinians as leading to annexation, which remains the Begin government's official goal. Demonstrations by local residents and commercial strikes occur almost daily, and there have been more than the usual number of stone-throwing incidents aimed at soldiers and settlers.

The government response has been to break up every demonstration, force open every struck shop and detain hundreds of suspects, ranging from 12-year-old stone throwers to well-known political leaders, journalists and teachers. In addition, press censorship has been stepped up, with a leading Arabic daily closed first for 10 days and now for a month

Despite the onset of winter rains, more unrest can be expected in the latest wave of West Bank resistance. Increased oppression there is nothing new. But perhaps one reason behind the harsh treatment given the Israeli demonstrators was the hope that they would be deterred from expanding the still relatively unusual practice of entering the occupied territories for political action. The well-publicized warm welcome the demonstrators received in Ramallah contrasts sharply with the officially cultivated image of a hostile, even anti-Semitic Palestinian population that supposedly wants to eliminate Israel and Israelis.

It isn't working.

The government's tactic, however, is showing signs of backfiring. The sight of tear gas being shot at Israeli demonstrators has sparked a flurry of activity among peace movement supporters who had been dormant for the past year,

accuse the university of being a focus of Palestinian nationalism and a center for agitation and civil resistance.

"Birzeit is not the problem," asserted economics student Ghassan Khatib recently at a discussion with Hebrew University students in Jerusalem. "The occupation is the problem. Even if they shut down the college permanently, there would still be demonstrations." Indeed, the latest wave of civil unrest has continued unabated during the two weeks since Birzeit's closure.

Khatib and his friends do not deny Birzeit's role as a focus of resistance. Rather, they are proud of it, though they point out that the same is true of other West Bank colleges in Nablus and Bethlehem. "Nor are they having it easy these days," one of the young men pointed out. "They are not officially closed, but students there are being constantly harassed, and on many occasions physically prevented from attending classes." High schools too have been af-

SOUTH AFRICA

A new policy of forcible relocation

By James North

JOHANNESBURG

AS SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY units drove into Angolan territory in last August's invasion, the Luanda government reversed its previous policy and opened its doors to foreign journalists. As a consequence, the outside world learned about the invasion in some detail as correspondents described devastated rural villages deep in Angolan territory. Several journalists were even attacked by South African warplanes as they accompanied an Angolan army convoy.

Similar access to the front is denied on the Namibian side. The 60,000 to 100,000 South African troops stationed there are completely off limits, except for the occasionally carefully guided tour. So news from the Namibian "operational area" must painstakingly be pieced together from accounts by returning soldiers and visitors who have managed to pick their way through the massive military and police presence.

Two South African church leaders, who visited a rural mission just south of the border after most of the South African invasion force had pulled back, have returned here with particularly alarming news. The two—who cannot be named, as their testimony almost certainly violates provisions of South Africa's Defense Act—claim that the military is forcibly moving thousands of people south in order to create a free-fire zone along the border.

The church officials interviewed several new refugees, who have arrived near the mission station. The South African-backed authorities in Namibia have put the refugee population at 800, but the church visitors said it is considerably more than a thousand, and growing.

One of the refugees, who identified himself only as Jeremiah, told the church people, "The South African soldiers forced us here. They say we were giving food to SWAPO, and they burned our

kraals [homesteads] and corn and threatened to kill us unless we moved." Another refugee, who had with him only his tattered clothing and the few goats he had managed to drive south, claimed the South African army was killing people who refused the orders to move.

The South African army, in one of its recent, typically terse communications, attributed the refugee problem to "the general war." The military had earlier claimed that SWAPO forces searching for food were forcing the people to move.

But all the refugees who spoke to the church officials denied any problems with SWAPO. Instead, they had harsh words for UNITA, the dissident Angolan movement, which they said had helped the South Africans to harass them. One refugee explained, "We know who UNITA are, because they wear the same boots and carry the same rifles as the South African soldiers."

South Africa's motives in creating the free-fire zone are clear. In the past few years, the guerrilla fighters of PLAN (People's Liberation Army of Namibia), SWAPO's military wing, have moved into northern Namibia with increasing ease, winning what the church leaders called overwhelming support from the local population. The free-fire zone, South Africa hopes, will limit continued infiltration from Angola, where SWAPO has external bases.

The zone will also help South Africa's stand-ins, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, in the event United Nations-supervised elections ever take place in the territory. Namibia, twice the size of California, has only one million people, but more than half of them are concentrated in the northern part of the country. The apartheid regime apparently hopes that if it severs the border it can limit SWAPO's electoral chances.

But almost no one here thinks the latest round of negotiations will end in a settlement. The consensus, shared even by some South African policymakers, is that SWAPO will sweep to victory in free and fair elections. The threat of Western support for sanctions is seen quite simply as hollow.

SWAPO, in that case, can be expected to press on with the liberation war, following the example of their guerrilla counterparts in Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe. They have already achieved considerable success, despite the stream of South African military communiques that claim they are on the edge of destruction. But there is one critical difference between Namibia and the other liberated countries.

In Namibia, the regime could conceivably simply kill enough people to weaken fatally the liberation movement. This is not a fanciful scenario, but one mentioned explicitly in regime circles. And

there is a sinister precedent. At the beginning of this century, the German colonialists who then controlled the territory quelled a black uprising with genocidal savagery. The Herero people, one of the groups most active in the revolt, numbered about 75,000 at the outset in 1904. By 1973, nearly 70 years afterwards, the Hereros had barely managed to build their population back up to 73,000.

The South African regime is easily capable of similar barbarism. In brutally establishing the free-fire zone along the Namibia-Angola border, it may be taking another ominous step toward the extermination of an entire people. ■



One of the Namibians forced by South Africa to abandon her home near the Angolan border in order to create a "free fire zone."

ARGENTINA

Surrogates in El Salvador?

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

HAVING RUN SHORT OF PEOPLE to "disappear" at home, the Argentine military junta is exporting its technology to other Latin American countries. Especially good markets for the techniques of torture and "disappearance" exist in Central America, notably Guatemala and El Salvador, where the Argentines are potential "proxies" or "surrogate" forces for a U.S. administration restrained by American public opinion from sending in its own troops.

This is a main reason the Reagan administration is eager to get Congress to rescind the 1976 ban on arms exports to Argentina, according to Argentine political exiles. (The U.S. Senate has lifted the ban on condition Argentina shows improvement in human rights. The House has yet to act.)

In Paris, former Senator Hipolito Solari Yrigoyen said the Argentine dictatorship reasoned like this: "We've waged a war against guerrillas and we won. We are specialists in repression. We want to export our technology."

A prominent member of the moderate

liberal Union Civica Radical, the largest political party in Argentina after the Peronists, Solari Yrigoyen was "disappeared" and tortured by the military junta in August 1976, apparently because of his concern for human rights. After months in prison he was allowed to go into exile, perhaps because as nephew of a former president of Argentina he benefited from more protests than more obscure victims.

Reagan administration pressure on Congress to lift the arms embargo against Argentina followed a secret agreement reached in Buenos Aires last September between Argentine military rulers and Haig's special envoy General Vernon Walters. They eight-point cooperation agreement hinged on a deal to lift the American arms embargo in exchange for Argentine help in putting down revolution in Central America and an improved human rights image.

General Walters made his agreement with army commander in chief General Leopoldo Galtieri, who, as head of the armed forces junta, has been the real ruling power and is expected to take over any day now from ailing president Roberto Viola. Galtieri is a great favorite of Richard Allen and other Reagan administration policy makers, for one thing because of his willingness to send Argentine

troops to El Salvador, in addition to the advisers already there. Galtieri and the Pentagon have reportedly worked out a plan to send in Argentine military experts to command Salvadoran troops in combat.

Informed sources say the Reagan administration would prefer a more presentable solution in El Salvador, but if the regime headed by president Napoleon Duarte fails to defeat the guerrillas, an even more bloody-minded dictatorship supported by Argentine troops and repression specialists is a possible alternative. General Walters got General Galtieri to agree to increase aid to the Salvadoran junta and to send troops to an inter-American force if requested.

The generals also agreed to contribute Argentine troops to the Sinai peace-keeping force, mainly as a step towards conditioning Argentine public opinion to accepting military involvement in distant places.

On the other hand, Walters urged the Argentines to tone down their intervention in neighboring Bolivia and their quarrel with the Chilean dictatorship. In particular the U.S. wants the Argentines, considered responsible for the July 1980 military coup in Bolivia, to stop backing the ruling drug dealers in that country.

The lifting of the U.S. arms embargo is considered a big triumph for the junta,

Solari Yrigoyen said, especially as it would mean admitting Argentine officers to retraining in U.S. bases.

Thus they are willing to make apparent concessions "for the galleries," the former senator said. "It's much easier for Mr. Rockefeller to do business with a government that says it is in the process of improving than with a government that has an assassin's image," he said, recalling that banker David Rockefeller has been the "great support and propagandist of the bloody dictatorship."

The junta's economic policy has been "a failure for the country but a success for Mr. Rockefeller" who broke into Argentina with the military coup of March 1976. "Mr. Rockefeller obtained oil concessions on the one hand, and on the other the right to operate Chase Manhattan Bank branches in Argentina for the first time. Under the military dictatorship, Mr. Rockefeller does whatever he wants in Argentina."

Since Peronism, Argentina has had a large nationalized sector, which is being gradually ruined or sold to private enterprise by the incompetent military men put in charge. Thus General Suarez Mason, "a specialist in killing and torturing," has turned the nationalized petroleum company UPF into "the only oil company in the world that doesn't make a profit," in the words of Radical spokesmen.

To gain respectability, the military men may be looking for "civilian groups who would be willing to constitute a fake democracy," Solari Yrigoyen said. A civilian regime without free elections would be a fraud, he stressed. ■

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

ELECTRICITY FOR "DEFENSE"

JOSEPH R. EGAN'S REPORT (ITT, NOV. 18) has led me to reinterpret my understanding of the nuclear power industry. I used to think that the utilities were intended to produce electricity and that plutonium was an unwelcome by-product. Now I understand that the reactors will produce plutonium and that electricity is a free by-product.

I still need one more bit of advice. Do I send my payment for next month's utility bill to Pacific Gas and Electric or the Department of Defense?

—Michael Perelman
Chico, Calif.

DUMB QUESTIONS?

I WAS GREATLY INTRIGUED BY THE article describing John S. Friedman's interview with Jacobo Timerman. Friedman asked many probing questions and gave Timerman an opportunity to publicize some of the less lime-lighted views of the liberal left in Israeli politics.

I was, however, appalled at the author's ignorant picture of Jewish society. Friedman presents the Jew as a warped and twisted creature. He seems to believe that the essence of Judaism is in its struggle against society. He queries Timerman, "If being a Jew means being in opposition to society and suddenly you are no longer in opposition, then what does it mean to be a Jew?" What does it mean to be black when there is no struggle for black identity? If anti-Semitism ever dies its death, will that then be the death knell for Judaism itself?

This line of absurd reasoning carries over to Friedman's next question. "Much of the creativity and accomplishments of the Jewish people have taken place in societies where Jews are oppressed. Will such creativity exist in Israel?" Why, of course, we Jews thrive under suppression. Not only do we need oppression to feel a bond to our people, we also need persecution to be creative and to push us to be contributing members of society.

It seems that I must revise my opinions on the holocaust—Hitler must only have been trying to facilitate the Jews (gypsies, homosexuals, etc.) in expressing their ethnic cultures and encouraging them to become more creative and productive citizens.

—Ulach Winston
Political Director, Hashomer Hatzair
Socialist Zionist Youth Movement

CRASS

DESPITE THE PROMISE OF "A SIMPLE 'human interest' journalistic account of everyday life in Israel-Palestine" without polemics or rationalization, I was struck by the crass one-sidedness and apparent selectivity of experiences in Grace Halsell's "Journey to Jerusalem," as related by Miriam Wolf (ITT, Nov. 11).

Strange that in all the interviews in the section on Judaism, the erstwhile "foot-soldier journalist" (according to Wolf) came across all kinds of interlopers and hawks, but never any bona fide Israeli adherents and supporters of the "Peace Now" movement. Similarly, Israeli military raids and repression of Palestinians are fully detailed with no corresponding accounts of terrorism by Arab extremists.

Somebody should remind Halsell and Wolf that the UN partition of Palestine in 1947 created two states, namely Israel and Palestine, the territory of the latter having been seized by Jordan in contravention of the UN decision.

—Irving Gold
Jupiter, Fla.

CROWDED

I AM AMAZED BY ANN TATTERSALL'S condemnation of NARAL (ITT, Nov. 27) for supporting prochoice Bob Packwood over so-called "prochoice" Ted Kulonoski in Oregon's election last year. When I first read of Packwood's right-wing preferences in a National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) brochure, as contrasted with Kulonoski's general liberalism, I hurriedly wrote them inquiring about Kulonoski's views on prochoice, which they hadn't bothered to mention in their analysis. They replied that, although they had agonized considerably over Kulonoski's attitudes on that question, they had decided to endorse him anyway. That hardly sounds "prochoice" to me.

While I support other causes, too, as long as they don't launch broadsides at women's rights, I can't fault NARAL for their single-minded pursuit of one goal. How else can any controversial group with limited resources joust effectively with Falwell and his 50 million bucks?

Tattersall's assertion that NARAL rejected Kulonoski "because he is a Catholic" is simply ridiculous. You don't see them turning their backs on Kennedy, do you?

Her notions about who "belongs on the left," though, are more sad than silly. Most minority groups usually feel that they need all the friends they can get, but leftists, alas, often sound like they think they already have too many. I trust that none of those "mindless" heretics in your ranks will cancel their subscriptions to your excellent journal just because Tattersall thinks they don't belong.

—Audrey Patton
Moody, Mo.

THANKS A LITTLE

THANKS FOR LARRY STEDMAN'S review of the school voucher campaign in California (ITT, Nov. 11). As a staunch supporter of the general idea, I welcome such discussion. Unfortunately, some of his biases are irksome, especially his seeming blind faith in the teachers' unions.

If these organizations were worth their salt, I wonder whether the public schools and public schooling would be as degraded as they are. The NEA and AFT have gone the bad way of all unions in this country—appeasement of their members' non-monetary gripes through strict don't-rock-the-boat, bread-and-butter unionism. More pay and more non-teaching days sometimes seem to be the only things these unions can effect, while such other concerns as classroom crowding, excessive paperwork that supercedes good lesson planning, peer review and decision-making instead of autocratic administrative fiat, and teacher control of administrators are sold out. In short, these unions are effectively anti-democratic.

Given the bureaucratic nature of the unions, it's also highly unlikely these two would support even the moderate

Fantini proposal (which I intend to look into more closely) that Stedman cites. For the greater freedom and control Fantini would give teachers in their workplace might lead to these same teachers insisting on more democracy in their unions—perish the thought!

Now, I'm sure there are leftists in the unions, but they fight the same battle against entrenched privilege within the unions that poor and minority parents fight against school bureaucracies. That is the fight to control their lives and their work when it is to the bureaucrats' advantage to deny them such control.

—Ray Olson
Minneapolis

MARRIAGE

STEVE MAX PERSISTS IN MISINTERPRETING marriage statistics. His letter (ITT, Nov. 11), like his article (ITT, Sept. 23) interprets the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* differently than we do.

In 1940, 59.6 percent of Americans (60.3 million) were married. In 1950, 1960 and at present, the figure has hovered at about 67.0 percent. Currently there are 101.0 million married. The percentage went a trifle higher (73.2 percent) in 1970.

It is true that those currently divorced and not remarried gradually increased from 1.4 to 5.7 percent of the population. The percentage of households that include one or more married couples was recently reported as being 59.8, a considerable drop from the peak of 78.2 in 1950, but this only reflects a change in housing patterns.

As Max says, "Economic trends are making family life increasingly difficult, particularly for working people in traditional single-earner households," which are very much on the decline.

—Elizabeth Briant Lee
—Alfred McClung Lee
Madison, N.J.

BISHOPS

ALTHOUGH I AM ANTI-NUCLEAR, I was appalled by your "concerned clergy" article (ITT, Nov. 25). You failed to mention that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops also declared their support for Hatch's anti-abortion amendment, stating: "We support the Hatch amendment as a realistic step that makes it possible to restore legal protection to the unborn." Any person who has read *Roe v. Wade* knows that fetuses have never been recognized as persons, making it difficult to restore rights that never existed. But, more importantly, the NCCB is more concerned about the possibilities of nuclear war than they are about women and their lives. I felt that this article might have left an erroneous impression regarding the "concern" of the Catholic hierarchy among your readers and wanted to correct it. The NCCB do not want women to have control over their reproductive lives—they would rather have women die than to have abortions performed to save their lives.

—Colleen Hughes
Chair, Omaha NOW Reproductive Rights Task Force

HISTORICAL REALITY

MAY I RESPOND TO CATHERINE R. Harris, who in her letter (ITT, Nov. 25) was critical of my injection and use of Marxist analysis in my review of Arno Mayer's *The Persistence of the Old Regime*.

I did not bring Marx and Engels in as judges-on-high of Mayer's work—he did. Early in the book he describes it as "Marxist history from the top down." From there he proceeded to interpret the "crises" of the 20th century, World War I, even fascism and World War II, as the results of the continued domination of European nations by pre-capitalist aristocracies. The reader throughout was invited to dismiss any designs, initiative or involvement in these crises of the capitalist class.

My reaction to this thesis was incred-

ulity. I agree with Harris that Marx and Engels were, surely and absolutely, aware of the persistence of the power and influence of pre-capitalist ruling elites in 19th century industrial development. Educated Germans, how could they not be? Both men were fascinated by the complexity, in different periods and in different societies, of the interaction between politically tenacious aristocrats and economically dominant bourgeois.

The dialectic of Marx and Engels was not, as Harris has it, an "abstract (ideal) scheme" imposed on concrete situations. As both of them said repeatedly: historical reality itself is dialectic. It teaches one to think dialectically. Imagine Marx and Engels focusing on the situations that are the raw materials of Mayer's book. Take this, for one small example. For decades before 1914 the German Ministry of War, manned by impeccably aristocratic Prussians, stubbornly resisted expansion of the army. Why?—because they feared the democratization, the proletarianization of the armed forces. But the German army was expanded, from 1911 to 1914, dangerously escalating tensions with the French and the Russians. Again, why?—because the Prussian aristocrats were forced to yield to what a brilliant German historian (Eckart Kehr) categorized as the imperialist passions of the "militarized and feudalized German bourgeoisie."

—Margaret George
DeKalb, Ill.

TAXING

THERE IS SOME CONFUSION IN MARK Kelman's article, "Nickel and Diming the Poor" (ITT, Nov. 18). A value-added tax (VAT) is not a sales tax and is not as regressive. There are several variants of VAT, depending on how depreciation is handled, but in its consumption variant (where capital expenditures are deducted in the year incurred) it is roughly equivalent to a proportional income tax, which is basically what we now have. Strictly speaking, however, VAT in its consumption variant is equivalent to a uniform tax on factor income (wages, profits).

Consumption, or expenditure taxes are different from both VAT and sales taxes. A consumption tax simply means that net additions to savings are exempted from taxation. The income then taxed can be taxed as progressively as you like. In fact, the idea of the expenditure tax was reintroduced forcefully into economic discussions by Nicholas Kalder, who has been associated with the British Labor Party. Lester Thurow, a member of DSOC, has also been pushing the idea. It is not in the least bit clear that all this hoopla about inadequate savings is warranted. Our tax system as it stands is ambiguous in its incentives for savings.

—Vince Eagan
Atlanta, Ga.

LETTER TO BRUCE DANCIS

REMEMBER 10 YEARS AGO WHEN WE were all doing our own little protests? You in prison for refusing to go to Vietnam. Those of us working for the farmworkers for \$5 a week instead of making money. We were all into letting everyone "do their own thing." Other than the Administration, we never criticized anyone for anything, and people were really doing strange things.

What a breath of fresh air to have a reviewer put his "reputation" on the line and write what he really feels in his guts (ITT, Nov. 11). Needless to say, I agree with you 100 percent that punk is simply a bunch of punks. But thank you for saying it so eloquently and truthfully.

—Georgia McFadden
Sacramento, Calif.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

DIALOG

Where have they all gone?

By Robert McGarrah
and David Kusnet

ALITTLE MORE THAN A year ago (*ITT*, Nov. 5, 1980), AFSCME published an anniversary advertisement attacking the exploitation of mentally handicapped people by nursing home operators and other profiteers.

Our ad was the only controversial one in the issue. Predictably, several letters-to-the-editor attacked AFSCME for allegedly opposing transfer of mental patients out of large institutions and into "the community."

About six months later, a "Perspective" by Michael Berres (*In These Times*, May 13, 1981) began with this warning: "A national campaign is being waged against deinstitutionalization. The activists—usually public employee unions—report tragic stories of retarded people who are 'dumped' into communities...." Berres went on to say that "public employee unions, such as AFSCME, which fear layoffs as a result of closing large institutions, constitute the second major force against deinstitutionalization."

Why bother to respond to Berres' piece at this late date? Because it is typical of a mindset among people sympathetic to labor and critical of business, except when the issue is how best to care for the mentally ill and retarded.

To many people whose consciousness was shaped during the '60s, mental hospitals symbolize much of what's wrong with our society. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and dozens of other films, plays, novels and television dramas portrayed the mental hospital as a metaphor for arbitrary authority. Mental institutions became synonymous with unnecessary shock treatments, drug overdoses, squalor and even sadism. Mental patients were assumed to be nonconforming, not sick, incarcerated, not hospitalized, and punished, not treated.

There is some truth in all this, but the problem, as with so many other public facilities such as public housing projects, was that public mental hospitals were designed to fail. In fact, AFSCME was first to raise many of the issues that later became the basis for legal actions by patients' rights advocates: deliberate underfunding, understaffing, inadequate equipment and poor sanitary conditions. Representing mental health workers, AFSCME did what we could to improve conditions in the institutions, but we came up against penny-pinching state legislatures and mental health departments.

Armchair critics of mental health institutions forget that poor treatment conditions for the patients are also poor working conditions for the employees. In fact the first "right to treatment" lawsuit in the nation was brought by employees against the State of Alabama. In Illinois, one need only examine the grievance victories by AFSCME Council 31—which represents workers in the state institutions—to realize that when our union defends staffing levels or wins better sanitary conditions in a hospital kitchen, we are fighting for the patients as well as our members.

During the late '60s and '70s, treatment of the mentally ill and retarded changed profoundly, but the system that emerged was not what AFSCME or any humane people could have wanted. In 1960, there were more than 525,000 mentally ill and retarded in state facilities. Now, there are fewer than 146,000 patients in institutions for the mentally ill and fewer than 135,000 in those for the mentally retarded. Every major state has cut back and closed down its institutions. Two

states—Massachusetts and Michigan—are planning to close down all their public institutions for the mentally ill and retarded.

Where have all the patients gone? According to the National Institute of Mental Health, there are more than 300,000 mentally ill people in private nursing homes. And, according to the U.S. House Select Committee on Aging, there are almost one million former mental patients living in squalor in private boarding homes.

Conditions in public institutions may have been the scandal of the '60s, but conditions in the new private facilities are the scandal of the '70s and '80s. Hundreds of thousands of mentally ill and retarded people were indeed "dumped" out of public institutions and into private nursing homes, boarding houses and flophouse hotels. New ghettos of mentally ill people scarred neighborhoods in big cities, including Chicago's Uptown and Manhattan's Upper West Side.

The best words to describe this process are "privitization" and "reinstitutionalization"—not "deinstitutionalization." Private, for-profit facilities have become the new "institutions" for the mentally ill and retarded. Like so many other business enterprises under late capitalism, the private health care industry has been almost entirely supported by public funds—Medicaid, Medicare, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

The old institutions may have failed to provide the most advanced treatment for

the mentally ill and retarded, but the new for-profit facilities don't even claim to provide psychiatric care—nor frequently even adequate medical care. Often, the nursing homes, boarding houses, and flophouse hotels don't even meet minimum standards for health and safety, especially fire safety. If the old institutions were "warehouses," the new institutions are death-traps. In Illinois, AFSCME members in the Departments of Mental Health and Public Aid are appalled at the conditions in private nursing homes, and Council 31 published an investigative study of how nursing home operators repeatedly violate health and safety codes.

Where have the self-styled mental health care reformers and patients rights advocates been while hundreds of thousands of mentally ill and retarded people have been entrusted to the tender mercies of the profiteers? Regrettably, many "reformers" have been concerned only with closing down public institutions—not with what happens to the patients after they leave the institutions. Not one lawsuit has been filed by the patients' rights lawyers to protect the residents of private nursing homes, boarding houses and flophouse hotels.

When the public sector gives way to the private sector in mental health care a "skimming" process takes place. The private facilities are glad to take the less severely ill or disabled patients, as well as any patient whose family can afford high fees. But severely ill or disabled patients

without wealthy families are either left in public institutions or dumped into the outposts of "cockroach capitalism"—the low-quality nursing homes and boarding houses.

Yes, there are some fine private community mental health centers. But in the words of Maryland's Mental Hygiene Director, Dr. Alp Karahasan, "Community mental health centers were set up to cater to the worried wealthy."

AFSCME's role.

As Berres acknowledged, AFSCME has worked with state governments in Michigan, New York and Rhode Island to build networks of state-operated, community-based centers for the mentally ill and retarded. These centers supple-

Into nursing homes, boarding houses and hotels that are the new scandal of the '70s and '80s.

ment the larger institutions that will continue to care for patients who require around-the-clock care. The community facilities will be staffed largely by former institutional employees who have been retrained for their new jobs.

Our union is urging other states to follow New York and Rhode Island's lead, rather than dumping the mentally ill and handicapped into nursing homes and boarding houses. A balanced system of mental health services should include both improved institutional care for those who need it and publicly operated community-based centers for those best treated in a non-institutional setting.

Only with public control of the mental health care system can there be accountability for the quality of care. Even in the worst days of the old, large institutions they were at least accessible to visits and inspections—and subject to lawsuits and court decisions ordering improvements or closings. Private nursing homes, on the other hand, deny inspectors and outside observers access to their premises, and ignore summonses for health and safety violations with impunity.

For all their shortcomings, public health facilities are the only outposts of the American health care system where patients are asked, "Where does it hurt?"—not "Do you have Blue Cross?"

In addition to accountability and accessibility, public facilities have one other important asset—public employees. Tens of thousands of men and women have devoted their careers to caring for the mentally ill and retarded. Rather than being thrown on an occupational scrapheap, career mental hygiene employees should be retrained for new jobs in the community facilities. Public community facilities staffed by unionized career employees—paid a living wage, with guarantees of decent hours and safe working conditions, and with a sense of dignity on the job—are better places for patient care than nonunionized private facilities, with an untrained, underpaid, exploited, and transient workforce.

Leftists should work for a publicly-controlled mental health care system, oriented towards people, not profits. But many on the left need to re-examine their assumptions about mental health care. Much of what passes for enlightened opinion on mental health care issues can be reduced to that old corporate wisdom: "Private is Better than Public." In these times, "Private Is Better than Public" guides most federal, state and local policies. But readers of *In These Times* shouldn't accept this corporate myth as a guide to mental health care policies. ■

Robert McGarrah is associate director of field services for health and institutions and assistant general counsel of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. David Kusnet is a communications staffer for AFSCME.



PERSPECTIVES

The money's in,
and the truth's out

By Michael Parenti

HOW REMARKABLE THAT the great experiment of supply side economics is being pronounced a failure even before its full effects are felt—and by the very people on Wall Street who but a short time ago lent Ronald Reagan their enthusiastic support.

Months ago, the critics of Reaganomics were predicting that huge tax cuts, massive increases in military spending and high interest rates would not revitalize the economy, slow down inflation or

reduce deficit spending. But financiers and industrialists turned a deaf ear. The critics persisted, pointing out that supply (as represented by a larger capital accumulation for business) does not of itself create demand. They warned that an upward redistribution of income would diminish the buying power of the public and induce greater stagnation.

The critics observed that most industries were already over-capitalized and that no matter how many favors are granted to business, investors will not invest in a sluggish market but will put their windfall gains into mostly unproductive, speculative ventures. This, in turn, would have a further stagnating and inflationary effect on the economy.

But the critics' frail voices were just a little too far left of center to be heard. They were drowned out by the chorus of hosannas emanating from the White House, Capitol Hill, Wall Street and from most of the press. Yet how fascinating that businessmen themselves suddenly started saying in September what they apparently could not countenance in August.

What has happened in the economy in a few months to cause this stunning reversal? Nothing. It's just that in August there were rich favors to be had, and they were taken: hundreds of billions in tax cuts over the next few years, more credits, loans, write-offs, grants, leases, subsidies, giveaways and deregulations—all intended to achieve economic recovery.

The outrageous truth is that not for a moment did business leaders think the administration's WPA program for the rich corporations would turn the economy around. But they kept that infor-

mation to themselves, for they are only human. How could they refuse such governmental largesse, especially in these hard times? Having been told that they are the leaders of our society, the captains of our industry, admired by the nation and utterly adored by the president, how could they resist thinking otherwise—at least until all the goodies were handed out.

Now when asked to do their part in the supply-side fairy tale, to play the prince and rescue us from the economic swamp, they show themselves to be the same old self-interested frogs. So they make strange noises. They say they need "more encouraging signs" and "a better climate" and the government will have to "come up with something that works."

Covered with White House kisses, the frogs croak: "Don't ask us to invest when there's nothing promising to invest in. There aren't enough people out there

regardless of what their public relations propaganda says, they know that when push comes to shove the corporations do not serve the nation, they serve themselves. They are not in the business of philanthropy but in the business of making the highest possible profit they can. They behave that way not because they are necessarily venal but because that is the nature of the private enterprise system. They could not do otherwise and still be enterprising. They must live by the first law of capitalism and accumulate profits—or go out of business.

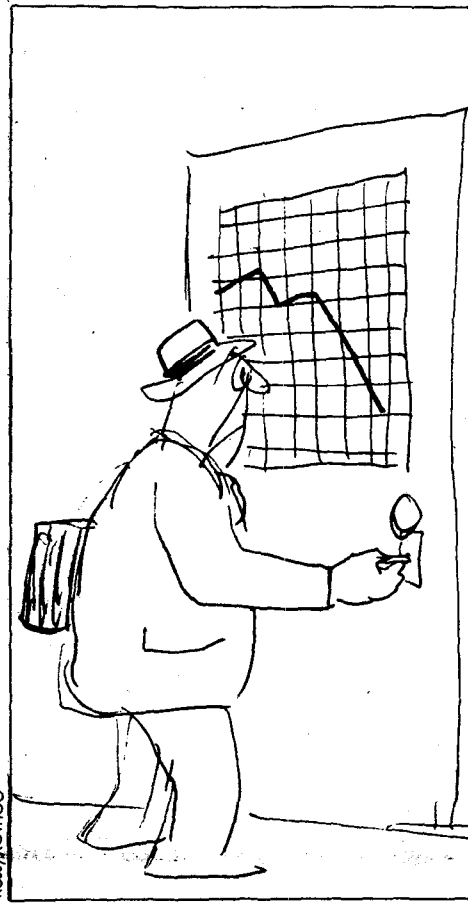
When pressed on this subject, business leaders will admit as much. They will tell you, quite correctly, that they could not survive if they tried to feed or house the poor, or if they tossed millions into non-profit projects for the environment, the cities or the generations yet unborn, or if they based their investment decisions on something so nebulous as a desire to "get the economy moving again." Nor can they invest to "create more jobs." In fact, most of their investments in new equipment and in overseas areas have the intended effect of cutting back on labor costs, creating less income and fewer jobs for the rest of us.

How is Reagan responding to this startling turn of events? With more of the same. He will do in December what he did in August. He will call for more slashes in human services, more gashes in the "safety net" that supposedly catches the deserving poor, more squeezes on entitlements and more lavish bolstering of profits with a whole new outpouring of public funds for private coffers (billed as "reindustrialization"), in a word, more giving to those who have and taking from those many who have not. And then, for appearances sake, there will be a few grudging slices into the military fat.

So it is that the people who run the country are the captives of their own ideology. They really believe that the wealth of this nation springs not from the labor of workers and the buying power of customers but from the bulging pockets of those who siphon off the profits.

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Michael Parenti is a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, where he is currently writing a book about the mass media.



with enough money to buy all the new things you want us to supply. Sure, \$50 billion in tax cuts is nice, but we'll squirrel it away until something promising comes along."

The leaders of business are correct. Re-

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INPRINT

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The tantrum syndrome

Growing Up Underground

By Jane Alpert

William Morrow, 372 pp., \$15.95

By Thomas Jacoby

Jane Alpert was one of the first young radicals to make her name in the violent protest of the late '60s. She had come to public attention in November 1968, when she and three friends were arrested by the FBI with glowing bombs to fight racialist efforts. Alpert's photograph—of a rather plain but intense young woman—appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*.

Before she could stand trial, Alpert jumped bail, disappearing "underground." For four years she traveled aimlessly back and forth across the country, working at odd jobs and reconsidering her radicalism. When in November 1974, she surrendered to the FBI and began to disassociate herself from the bombings. "I'm not that person anymore," she told the judge who sentenced her to 27 months in prison. "I don't reject her. I feel very compassionate for her." She claimed she was still trying to understand the "craziness" that had come over her and her fellow conspirators. It was, to say the least, a baffling confession. At best, it suggested that Alpert was trying to understand where the radical left went wrong—and that perhaps she could find the line that separated its ideas from the excesses of its most extreme tactics.

Alpert's autobiography starts with much the same kind of pro-

mise. "I offer this book," she writes, "not in the service of any particular ideology or with the intention of discrediting any persons or movements but rather to set the record straight."

There is something troubling about Alpert's story. Her account appears designed to vindicate herself. In early chapters this means playing up her idealistic political concerns, describing the demonstrations that friends took part in, the gestures of conscience that she would like to have made. When she comes to the bombings, she makes little effort to reconcile contradictions between the scruples she now professes she felt and the "undiluted joy" she experienced as she

against the war in Vietnam. Alpert writes about her own confusion: "I still don't understand all the forces that drew me into the conspiracy or the underground... I am certain that politics was only one part of what inspired me." She admits that her radicalism had less to do with principled objections to the war than with a vague and indiscriminating sense of outrage. In shouting "Hell no, we won't go!" on the steps of the Pentagon in 1967, she meant to denounce not only the draft and the war in Vietnam but also all "the religious and patriotic ideas my parents had tried to compel me to respect from the time I was a small child." Yet she hardly seems to grasp the fundamental difference between her own outrage and intractable social problems.

For her, politics are a matter of romantic adventure, a thrilling and vaguely exciting kind of heroism. She was drawn to the SDS because, she says, "I wanted something cataclysmic to happen in my life," wanted to participate in "the emergencies created by the Vietnam war [and] the assassination of Bobby Kennedy."

She explains frankly that she came to political violence not through Leninist theory or dissatisfaction with democracy but in the arms of her lover Sam Melville, a moody, self-destructive man who also introduced her to LSD and encouraged her to repudiate monogamy. Unlike many young leftists of the '60s, she had virtually no knowledge

Continued on page 15

For young Jane Alpert, political acts were a way to rebel against her parents.

carried a handbag full of dynamite into an office building on Foley Square. Thus she casts herself as a heroine even in an episode she has bitterly repudiated.

Like many young rebels in the '60s, she telescoped personal and political grievances, linking her complaints about her parents' middle-class values to her protest



Jane Alpert today seems to have learned little from the years underground.

NOTEBOOK

No Substitute for Madness

By Ron Jones

Island Press, Covelo, CA, 157 pp., \$8.00

A "benny," according to writer-teacher-coach Ron Jones, is an extraordinary athlete who can exalt a team with talent and passion. When all white up-tight Cubberly High in Palo Alto, Calif., gets its first busload of blacks, out stomps a stumpy kid who can't pass or shoot or dribble or rebound. But Huey's energy and joy transform a fragmented bunch of outsiders and greedlings into a family of winners. And Jones, their emotionally-isolated coach, learns to redefine "benny" beyond skill and score.

Two of the seven stories in this smoothly-written memoir—"The Acorn People" and "The Third Wave"—have already been adapted for TV. No wonder. Despite their subversive subtext—individual fulfillment through cooperative struggle—these tales are dramatic and entertaining. They are also humane and inspiring. Among Jones' considerable gifts is the rare ability to write about the disturbed and the handicapped



George Orwell

with both dignity and sentiment. This is a benny of a book. RL

George Orwell

By Raymond Williams
Columbia University Press, 102 pp., \$5.00

This 1971 essay, now reprinted, still makes bracing reading. Written for a generation of readers that venerated Orwell's political journalism while criticizing the way his later works provided Cold War fodder, it locates Orwell within his class and era. Wil-

liams shows Orwell as a man in conscious and vulnerable construction of a social identity, who lived through an era that produced, finally, a terrifying political isolation—one that could create the despair of 1984. "Faith in the people had to be projected to an evolutionary distance," writes Williams, "much farther than would ever have been necessary if his original class idea of unthinking subhumans had not translated so easily into a disillusioned view of the apathetic and tolerant mass." Williams ends with excellent advice: "The thing to do with his work, his history, is to read it, not imitate it." PA

Huey Long

By T. Harry Williams

Vintage Books, 884 pp., \$8.95

For 2,500 years philosophers have assumed that politics is an appropriate activity for rational people. This account of Huey Long's life and political career suggests otherwise. Bringing the irrational and the mythological into context is exactly what T. Harry Williams attempts to do as he helps us to understand the meteoric and frantic career of this difficult Southern politician. In this issue (the original appeared in 1969), Williams describes for us what all Southerners of the last generation must have known—Depression-era politics south of

the Mason-Dixon line was not the domain of rational men. We are offered much more than the biography of a famous public figure. We are offered a social history of the reality of public life in the South before the civil rights movement and the advent of the "new South." Williams resurrects the history of Southern populism in compelling fashion. This book is important, not only as the best available biography of Huey Long, but also because it has the all-too-rare quality of providing a sense of the times. JS

Who Knows: Information in the Age of the Fortune 500

By Herbert I. Schiller

Ablex, 355 Chestnut, Norwood NY 07648, 187 pp., \$17.50

A useful overview of current themes in the political economy of information. Of particular interest is the detailing of ways government communications research-and-development and information are being turned over to private hands. (It is getting harder for a library-going public to find government documents and to benefit from taxpayer-funded research in communications.) Also treated are multinational conglomerates' growing control over new technologies, UN attempts to raise questions of equality in access to information and technology by poorer nations; and construction of research and in-

vestment priorities according to corporate—especially financial—interests. PA

Not a Through Street

By Ernest Larsen

Random House, 225 pp., \$11.95

This is a detective story to be read without guilt. Emma Hobart, the heroine, hasn't found the aspirin to relieve her political hangover from the '60s. She still fights with her mother's visions of her as an educated, worldly woman, and she still resists her friend Hoyt's hopes for more order and sanity in everything from their political concerns to their apartment fixtures and their relationship. When Hoyt is killed in an assignment as an investigative reporter, her sense of justice, personal frustration and rage at social circumstance lead her into a tangle of love, violence and corruption dating back to Vietnam and the protests and criminal revelations of the late '60s. The writing is smart, edgy and urban, and in the figure of slangy, hard-voiced, concerned Emma Hobart, Larson gives us a female detective with body and bite. The ending falters a bit, but this is a characteristic problem of the detective genre, where plot becomes a preparation for revelation. PS

Contributors: Pat Aufderheide, Robert Lipsyte, Paul Skenazy, Jim Steiker

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

TELEVISION

Unions deliver a message to the tube

By Pat Aufderheide

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) has completed the second phase of its close watch on commercial TV's representation of workers and of unions, on both entertainment and news shows. They're counting the survey a success, too, even though the news isn't all good.

From a look at the work seen on prime-time TV, you might think that the GNP makes itself.

The last time the Machinists monitored TV (*In These Times*, July 2, 1980), they discovered that production workers were rarely portrayed in entertainment (and if shown, often denigrated), and that network news had a strong pro-corporate, anti-union bias.

This time—with participation in 32 cities, up from around 1,500 monitors last time to around 2,500 this time, and joined by workers from the Operating Engineers and Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers unions—the survey results show that things look even worse.

Entertainment series involving unions actually declined, from insignificant to infinitesimal. There were 16 times as many prostitutes as mineworkers in TV reality, and 10 times the number of fashion models as of farmworkers. Service work accounted for most work done on TV—as if, Machinist monitors point out, the Gross National Product made itself up.



Union members found little to hold interest in *LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE*'s saccharine melodrama.

"There's no perception on TV that it takes any kind of skill to make America rich," said Jerry Rollings, IAM assistant director of communications. "Machinists need to see that they're not just some peon that goes to work so their kids can go to college."

News coverage on unions rose, compared with last year's monitoring survey results, but it was mostly pro-corporate reporting about strikes. The monitors, whose results were collated and computerized by consultant William Young, found that "most network reports have increased their corporate slant since the Reagan administration began." They point to biased phrases like "worker demands" (never "management demands") and to TV's preference for drama over information in the news.

It works.

But even though the image of labor and of unions on TV doesn't show statistical signs of improvement, Machinists are pleased with the monitoring program. The first survey showed them that their results, used properly, can have an effect. The union monitors were, from the start,

organized into media action groups that could use their results as points of discussion with TV management at local and network levels. A station in Providence, R.I., put an IAM member on its advisory board to screen previews of programs touching on union issues, after monitors met with the station manager to protest the image of

apprenticeship programs, unlike firms in other major industrial nations. KNXT agreed to produce a five-part series on the importance of apprenticeship programs.

Machinists are hoping that with computerized monitoring, they can deliver results faster to station managers. Right now that's still just a hope, since this



Monitors praised *LOU GRANT* highly, for acknowledging organized labor and developing interesting characters.

labor on the air.

Probably the IAM's most visible success was in Los Angeles, where an active union group repeatedly brought its objections to the CBS-owned KNXT. The station manager invited 15 labor representatives to a seminar, introduced them to the news director and gave them an inside phone line to call in news items. The IAM group also explained one of its top concerns to the station—Americans lose skilled jobs to foreigners because American corporations refuse to offer

time computer snafus actually delayed the results.

Perhaps the biggest change as a result of the monitoring is to be found among the monitors themselves. Machinists director of communications Bob Kalaski, who has piloted this project from the start, loves to recall an early training session with local union leaders. It was foundering, he says; you could see that earnest, worried look that meant he and Young weren't reaching their audience.

"Finally I pulled aside a guy I

knew well—about 56, a union veteran who has been at negotiating tables up against management guys from Lockheed and Boeing."



Monitors found *B.J. AND THE BEAR* "simple-minded."

What's the problem? Kalaski asked him. "'Don't you see?' he said. 'You're asking us to go in and confront the manager of a TV station! That's the big time!'"

Kalaski solemnly offered to buy him dinner if the station manager wasn't more afraid of him than he was of the manager; and Kalaski has never had to pay up.

"I saw him two weeks later, and he was bursting with pride. 'I'm going back there,' he said, 'and one of these days I'm gonna buy that station!'"

Such schemes are presently out of reach of the IAM's restricted communications budget—indeed, even another round of monitoring looks too costly right now. But Kalaski at least hopes to train more of the rank and file in media criticism and to revise the IAM's *Media Project TV Trainers Manual* to fit ever-blinker deregulatory realities. ■ For survey results write IAM, 1300 Connecticut Ave., NW, #909, Washington, DC 20036.

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Alpert

Continued from page 13 of politics: making and planting a bomb and notifying the underground press was, she says herself, no more complicated than "preparing a dinner party." Today Alpert admits that she went along largely because she was afraid of being "left out" by her friends. As it happened, her rejection of guerrilla tactics coincided exactly with her separation from Sam.

She looks somewhat more closely at the feminist ideas she encountered during her years underground and details a rather elaborate theory about patriarchy and biological determinism. At least feminist ideas were related to something she had experienced firsthand—in her own relations with men and in a consciousness-raising group she joined when she was living as a fugitive in San Francisco. But, by her own admission, even her feminism grew from unsharable personal concerns: a desire to acknowledge publicly that her mother was "right" in criticizing her radical friends, and an interest in the feminist Robin Morgan that Alpert herself likens to her fatal attraction to Melville.

Alpert uses her emotional con-

cerns not merely to explain but also to justify and excuse the excesses of her radical activity. Thus she dwells on her childhood and adolescence, chapters full of Freudian melodrama. Her mother is hateful, her father weak and disappointing; teenaged Jane is lonely and bookish, but also driven to sexual rebellion. Then, by way of explanation, she quotes ominously from the report of a psychiatrist she saw once during college, as if his prediction of "serious trouble" were enough to absolve her of responsibility for placing a bomb in a federal office building some five years later.

Alpert can be remarkably candid about her own mistaken judgment, both in the months before the bombings and later, underground. But in the end, for her, these errors are of little importance; she assumes that like most personal "experiences" they are traumatic but of little consequence—the kind of unavoidable mistakes everyone makes in the course of "growing up."

As she nears the end of her story, she grows increasingly shrill and vindictive, concerned more than ever with personalities and private emotions. Her account makes it clear that her vicious denunciation of the Weather Underground, published in *Ms.* magazine during her last year in hiding, owed less to poli-

tics than to personal rivalries—a bitter game in which Alpert played Robin Morgan off against Weatherwomen like Cathy Wilkerson and Bernadine Dohrn. As a result, Alpert's chapters on her surrender seem wholly unreliable, concerned above all to settle old accounts and defend herself against the charge that she informed on radical friends.

Alpert's is a disappointingly self-serving book. As for the moral impulse that her generation brought to politics and sometimes squandered in its moralistic zeal, she hardly seems to recognize such ideals, even in the actions of friends. As a young girl, Alpert hoped that political activism would give her a sense of purpose, something to save her from her own stifling narcissism. But she does not seem to understand that both politics and his-

tory are larger than oneself. ■ *Tamar Jacoby is an assistant editor of the Op-Ed Page of the New York Times.*

Gifts

Continued from page 16 ized and depersonalized instance of what is true in our own personal relations: a person in debt is trustworthy in a way that a person who is "square" is not.

The social importance of gift-giving does not excuse a wasteful society or deny that ours is a narcissistic culture. But it suggests we reconsider knee-jerk attacks on advertising and consumption that attribute extravagant material consumption to capitalism. What may be unusual about our society is that we so often ex-

press social attachments through newly-purchased, newly-manufactured (rather than handcrafted or ritually recycled) goods.

It is tempting to join in the Christmas chorus that abhors the commercialization of a sacred occasion. And it is surely true that businesses use the Christmas season to exploit people's decent impulses. Yet our consumer society has built on foundations that are widespread in human cultures. While leftists attack the maldistribution of income and goods, they may uncritically attack the pleasure people take in goods and the way they use goods to their own social, decent and human end. ■

Michael Schudson, who teaches sociology and communications at the University of California, San Diego, has written Discovering the News: a Social History of American Newspapers.

by Nicole Hollander

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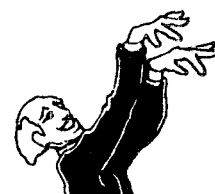
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All that glitters is not sold

By Michael Schudson

CHRISTMAS AS A "FESTIVAL OF CONSUMPTION," as Daniel Boorstein called it, is recent. The Puritan colonists fined people who observed Christmas. Well into the 19th century, Protestant Americans did not treat Christmas as a major event. Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and Dutch Reformed groups celebrated Christmas but Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians opposed any recognition of the holiday. In the early 1800s, business was conducted as usual on Christmas day.

But in the 1840s Irish Catholics brought their Christmas traditions to this country while German and Dutch immigrants popularized their own folk traditions, including the practice of giving gifts to children. Newspaper advertisements making special appeals to the Christmas gift-giving season date to the 1830s, but not until the 1860s did December become the leading month of the year for retail sales. In 1867 Macy's in New York stayed open till midnight Christmas Eve, setting sales records. As late as 1880, a Christmas tree ornament manufacturer had to work hard to persuade F.W. Woolworth to try \$25 worth of his product, but a few years later Woolworth ordered \$800,000 worth from the same supplier. Exchanging Christmas cards became a common practice in the 1880s, by the 1890s Christmas was normally a legal holiday for the public schools, and by 1910 banks started "Christmas clubs" as a special incentive to stimulate savings.

A short story in *The Survey*, "The Night of the Children," dramatized the plight of salesgirls who worked 15 hour days in the weeks before Christmas because people delayed their Christmas shopping until the last minute. The result, for the story's heroine, was spending Christmas Day delirious in a hospital. The story was reprinted in small-town newspapers under the headline, "Buy Christmas Presents Early" and "Consider Hardworking Sales Persons and Do It Now."

Proof of prestige.

Today Christmas is well-established as a festival of consumption. But it is also a festival of reunion, of restating and renewing ties of kinship and friendship. The French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss marveled at the exchange of Christmas cards in the U.S.—"the proof, ritually exhibited on the recipient's mantelpiece during the week of celebration, of the wealth of his social relationships or the degree of his prestige." The expensive wrapping paper and frequent duplication of gifts struck Levi-Strauss as evidence of "a vast and collective destruction of wealth" similar to the potlatch practices of some primitive societies.

The secular side of Christmas is less about consuming than about giving. O. Henry's short story, "Gift of the Magi," celebrates heroic acts of love in the giving of gifts. The two impoverished lovers sacrifice their dearest possessions to buy gifts for each other. The man sells his watch to buy a comb for his wife's lovely hair and, ironically, she cuts off her hair and sells it to buy a fob for her husband's cherished watch.

An object, even a mass-produced object, becomes more valuable if received as a gift. In a recent study of what middle-class and working-class families find important about the material objects they possess, Chicago social scientist Eugene Rochberg-Halton found that gifts bulk large among people's most cherished possessions.

Forty percent of "especially cherished" objects were received as gifts or had been inherited. Nearly half of jewelry mentioned was acquired by gift (and another 17 percent by inheritance). Forty percent of clocks (and 33 percent by inheritance), 44 percent of glassware (33 percent by inheritance), 47 percent of silverware (plus 29 percent by inheritance) were acquired as gifts. For children, 83 percent of cherished stuffed animals were received as gifts. Two-thirds of cherished house plants came as gifts, often from a cutting from a friend's plant, and so friendship came to be symbolized "through a bond of living matter."

Social debts.

Levi-Strauss could have predicted it—some objects are more suitable as gifts than others "precisely because of their non-utilitarian nature." While social critics often attack advertising for manipulating people into buying things they do not need, it is rarely noticed that so many of the most unneeded purchases are bought as gifts. December toy sales represent more than 40 percent of annual sales; candy, stationery, greeting cards, books, art, and cosmetics and toiletries a quarter of annual sales; tobacco and liquor more than 20 percent of annual sales.

Advertisers are well aware that people are as often gift-givers as direct consumers. Because wristwatches are frequently given as gifts, for instance, watch manufacturers concentrate their advertising in the Christmas season. Indeed, advertisers often appeal to gift-giving impulses even for products people buy for themselves. Shirley Polykoff, who wrote the campaign for "Clairol Loving Care" hair rinse, wrote the line, "Makes your husband feel younger too, just to look at you!" She wrote in her autobiography, "You can see how this could practically turn the act of hair-coloring into a selfless little something one did for one's loved ones."

Giving gifts is an essential part of social relations. We are involved with one another in a cycle of indebtedness. People are astonished to learn that they are better credit risks if they are in debt than if they are not—it sounds like an absurdity that only Visa or Mastercharge could have invented. But it is an institutional

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